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ST WORLD

THE LEADING CURRENT NEWS SOURCE FOR THE ATARI ST

NAMM SHOW
see page 3

GFA ARTIST
see page 13

HINTS & TIPS
see page 20

VIDEO-PRO
see page 23

Wordprocessing for the Professional

WordPerfect V4.1 for the Atari ST

If you have used the IBM PC, then you have heard of **WordPerfect**. It is regarded as perhaps the best all around word processor for that series of computer by experts the world over. Now the power appreciated by so many IBM users is available on the Atari ST!

I have used the PC version of WordPerfect for over two years on an XT and most recently on the new PS/2 Model 30. Having the ST at home, I used 1st Word or the VE Editor in Idris to write articles, then transported the ASCII files to work VIA Idris or MTC-Shell. Once there, they could be spell checked or formatted if necessary using WordPerfect. All articles are sent out to ST World on IBM formatted diskettes since the ST and IBM data formats are the same.

The obvious advantage of being able to work solely under WordPerfect and with the ability to use the same data files in the WP format on the ST or IBM PS/2 are alone sufficient to warrant purchasing the product.

But what about the 1st Word user looking to upgrade to a more professional system? Why are so many people hooked on Word Perfect?

The Answer

Part of the answer to WHY people love WordPerfect is evident when you open the box and examine the documentation and distribution diskettes....ALL SIX OF THEM. WP is a full sized professional word processing system with Speller and Thesaurus. It allows itself to be set up with up to six printers, and change from one printer to another from the GEM menu bar. It is easy to install and easy to learn. New users will especially like the "Learn" diskette. This step by step tutorial can make a pro even out of the most unsuspecting tenderfoot in only a few hours.

The documentation is complete and sections are appropriately labeled in BOTH DIRECTIONS. If you HATE the mouse, WP was made to be used by the combination of function keys and shift, control, or alternate keys. A color coded template makes keyboard use quick to master, and for the touch typists in your home or office that cringe at taking their hands off of thekeyboard, this is a big plus. WP documentation covers the use of these code key combinations in depth, but in an ingenious way, the mouse manipulations to accomplish the same tasks are highlighted in the right margin! Your continued love affair with your plastic rodent is insured in the ST version of WP as ALL functions support the mouse as well as the keyboard codes that PC users will be most familiar with.

Installation

To install WordPerfect, just boot your ST with the diskette labeled "WordPerfect", then click on the "WP_BACKUP.PRG" icon to backup the distribution diskettes. You will be prompted to click on boxes that describe your system, and finally to click on the "Backup Disk" button. Even single drive users will appreciate the ease of the backup program which prompts for source and destination diskettes, and new source diskettes when needed. Two drive systems will of course simply feed source and formatted blank diskettes to the program as called for.

If you are installing WP on a Hard Drive, make a "\WP" folder in whichever subdirectory you wish WordPerfect to be installed, then open the "\WP" folder. Insert the "WordPerfect" diskette in drive A: and drag it's icon into your "\WP" folder copying its entire contents. Repeat this for the "Speller" and "Thesaurus" diskettes.

continued on page 32

New Monitor Switch Box

Astra Systems has introduced a monitor switching controller for the ST and Mega systems, "ASTRA SW2" ($59.95). Both the monochrome and color monitor power lines are plugged into the controller and a single monitor cable is connected to your system. When pressing the switch to switch monitors the SW2 turns off the power to one monitor and turns the power on to the other monitor as it switches. This prevents you from accidently switching monitors while they are both on (having both on while switching will cause severe damage to your monitor). A audio out line is also provided to allow you to use a supplemental speaker system. For users having a RF modulator in their system, they can use the composite out line to connect to a television, composite monitor or VCR. The SW2 is a safe and convenient method for connecting color and monochrome monitors to your system and eliminating the troublesome cable swapping.

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ST WORLD INDEX
VOL III, NO. 3 MARCH / 1988

WordPerfect V4.1	Pg. 1
Miditrack ST Update	Pg. 29
The NAMM Show National Association of Music Merchants	Pg.3
Rings of Zilfin New from Stragetic Simulations	Pg. 18
Infocom Plundered Hearts & Nord and Bert	Pg. 14
GFA Artist Formerly Michtron' GFA Film	Pg. 13
Hints & Tips Featuring Bill Skurski	Pg. 20
Logistik	Pg. 11
Zap, Zap, Zap Power line conditioners	Pg. 22
Video-Pro Point of Sale System for Rental Dealers	Pg. 23
Superbike Challenge	Pg. 11
The Slasher How to Avoid Getting Hit by a Computer Virus	Pg. 9
Previews	Pg. 25
True BASIC Books & Support	Pg. 8
Video Vegas Doctor Dave's Casino at Home	Pg. 6
Classified	Pg. 27
Bulletin Board Manufacturer's & Publisher's Notices	Pg. 26
All Things Considered	Pg. 28
Tanglewood	Pg. 5
Spectrum 512	Pg. 4

FIND YOUR NUMBER CONTEST!
CONTEST

This one is easy, no fancy graphics, no cartoons, no high scores... Just send in your name, complete mailing address and telephone number on a standard size postcard. We will send you a number. Each month we will at random select 5 numbers and print them in ST World. If your number matches, you WIN! You will have until the next issue of ST World is printed, (Approximately the 15th of the following month.) to claim your prize. Every month we will print the names belonging to the number of the previous month... Your friends will tell you what you missed out on if you didn't read ST World... So act now, send in your postcard and than look for your number in ST World every issue!

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The reviews are in . . .

"'A Best Buy' I'm impressed"
David H. Ahl, Atari Explorer, Nov-Dec 1987

"If you've got an Atari, you probably need this program."
Jerry Pournell, Byte Magazine, October 1987

"pc-ditto is a winner."
Charlie Young, ST World, July 1987

"This is the product we have been looking for."
Donna Wesolowski, ST Informer, August 1987

"This truly incredible software emulator really works."
Mike Gibbons, Current Notes, September 1987

NOW! RUN THESE IBM PROGRAMS ON YOUR ATARI ST.

Lotus 1-2-3	Flight Simulator	Framework	Symphony
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Crosstalk IV	Carbon Copy	Chart-Master	Print Shop
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GW Basic	Managing Your Money	Silvia Porter's	pfs:Professional File

And Hundreds More!

pc-ditto is a software-only utility which expands the power of your Atari ST to imitate an IBM PC XT. No extra hardware is required (an optional 5.25-inch drive may be required for 5.25-inch disks). All your IBM disks will work "out-of-the-box".

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NAMM SHOW

Laurie Z. Pohlenz

The National Association of Music Merchants Show

Winter - Los Angelas, CA

by Laurie Z. Pohlenz

The National Association of Music Merchants' bi-annual extravaganza, known to most of us mere mortals as the NAMM Show, always manages to deliver a mind-(and ear--) boggling array of new products. Each manufacturer tries to "out-dazzle" the other with impressive new product specs and displays, and I always manage to come home being "dazed and confused" with what I've seen, but thrilled nonetheless at the exciting new products I've witnessed. The Winter NAMM Show, which was held in Anaheim on January 15, 16, and 17, was no exception, and here's a rundown of all the hot new Atari products introduced at the show.

To start at the top, Atari Corporation themselves were again at the show, setting the precedent at previous NAMMs of being the first computer manufacturer to exhibit their wares at this music retailer's convention, although another computer manufacturer did follow by exhibiting at this time. Atari once again showed their support for music software manufacturers by creating a demonstration area in front of the exhibit for various software companies to "show their stuff." Atari should be commended for their early and continued support of musical applications for their computers, and all anyone had to do to find out the results was to look around the show to see the popularity of the ST's everywhere.

Scoring programs seemed to be on everyone's agenda. **Hybrid Arts**, which has long supported Atari products, was showing their long-awaited *"EZ SCORE PLUS"*. In addition to allowing you to convert any SMPTE TRACK or EZ-TRACK song file into notation, you can enter the notes via the mouse, key commands, or from any MIDI keyboard. The program, which is available right now (YEA!!) for $99.95, is easy to get around, has a through manual, and can handle up to three staves. A nice touch was adding the ability to include guitar chords, and of course, you can enter text, too. Another scoring program, *"MIDI SCORE PROFESSIONAL"* should be available about summertime and will handle up to 60 staves. Also introduced was a useful little program called *"HYBRIDSWITCH"* for multiple program usage (without changing disks!), to be available soon. On the more pro side, Hybrid showed ADAP II, capable of 44.1 kHz sampling DIRECT TO HARD DISK - another trend to be seen around the show. Options include an AES-EBU Digital-to-Digital interface to send or receive sounds from CD or DAT sources and SMPTE code for video and motion picture lockup.

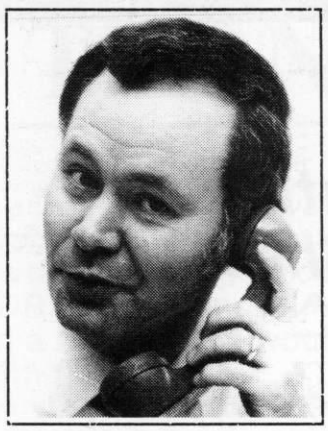
Over at **Steinberg Research/Russ Jones** booth I saw an exciting new update soon to be released for all you *PRO-24* users - version 3.0 is soon to come! The new version will include the ability to record up to 4 tracks at once, and even edit WHILE recording! The user interface is made easier by letting you click and drag to copy tracks and patterns, as well as to make changes on the edit screen. Expanded Logical Edit, Drum Edit and the ability to print out the Score-Edit screen will be included, and many more features than I can tell you about here. Suffice it to say, it was impressive. Also, the trend is toward standardizing MIDI file formats - it's just a matter of time until any manufacturer's sequencer files can be used with, say, another's printing program. Everyone stands to gain from standardization, and it was a welcome sight at Hybrid's, Steinberg's, and many other booths. Also of mention at the Steinberg booth were a new version soon to be available of *MASTERSCORE*, their professional printing program, a Yamaha DMP-7, *MIXING EDITOR, E MAX* and *PROPHET 2000/2 SOUNDWORKS* sample editing software to join existing *AKAI S-900* and *ENSONIQ MIRAGE editors*, and an inexpensive ear training program called simply enough, *"THE EAR."*

Also doing demonstrations around the clock was Charles Faris with his **COMPUMATES** line of programs, an excellent line including *"FINAL TRAK"* sequencer, the only one out that allows you to do real time volume changes on mixdown, as well as real time tempo changes while recording. Updates on the program include Playback Macros great for live use (to design your own commands from any MIDI keyboard!), and a real useful note event editor to edit "on the fly" while you're playing back. A fun side note is that this is the only sequencer with manuals in 6 languages - Italian and Portuguese speakers take note! Also available from COMPUMATES are a variety of visual sound editing programs called *"SYNTHDROIDs"* for the Casio CZ series, Korg DW-8000 and DSS-1, and Kawai K3 and R-100 (and K5, soon!) Their scoring program, *"FINAL SCORE"* will take files from ANY other program and looks real easy to use (ETA around 1 month). Around the corner from COMPUMATES was a cool D-50 Editing program by **COMMAND DEVELOPMENT** with something called *"Offspring"* - taking two patches and *"breeding"* them together to produce a new one! It will read Sonus, Dr. T, PA Decoder, and Bo Tomlyn voice files, so you D-50 owners could have fun with this one!

Many of the abovementioned programs require 1 Meg, so it was nice to see **PASSPORT** come out with a slightly smaller program called *"MASTER TRACKS, JR"*, which boasts some great editing as well as step-record features - it really looks like a lot of program for the price (especially for you 510 users!). *MASTER TRACKS PRO*, the sequencer ported from MAC is now version 2.0, and includes punch-in/out, undo, enhanced quantization, elapsed time counter, and lots more - and it's a fun program to use!

Dr. T had lots of action, and the main items of interest were *KCS "Level 2"* (an enhanced version of their sequencer), and a fun program soon to be out called *"TUNESMITH"*, a creative musical tool. They were also showing their

continued on page 30



Victor T. Albino

Spectrum 512

by Victor T. Albino

One of the more fascinating and rewarding aspects of watching computer hardware and software developments is the regularity with which people continually manage to accomplish that which was previously thought to be impossible. For example, the ST computer, according to its manufacturer, is capable of displaying only 16 colors on the screen at one time. It has a palette, or total number of possible colors of 512, but the user is restricted to using only 16 of these simultaneously. However, it seems to be an unwritten law of nature that as soon as someone says something can not be done, there will always be someone else who figures out how to do it. This is certainly true for rules regarding computers where limits are being pushed back all the time. The latest example of this phenomenon is SPECTRUM 512 which allows all 512 colors to be displayed on the screen simultaneously.

Why all the interest in having so many colors? Are not 16 colors enough? The reason is simply that, beyond a certain point, the smoothness of the monitor image begins to result more from a greater number of colors than from increased resolution. The best example of this can be found on regular broadcast TV. The resolution of the TV screen is not all that high, but because it can display so many colors simultaneously, the pictures appear to be very realistic.

SPECTRUM 512 does not stop with merely making more colors available than ever before. It also has added some drawing functions that have never been available either. Such things as NO ZAG which helps to take the steps out of diagonally drawn lines, or ANTI-ALIASING and DITHERING which produce smoother, more naturally appearing images. There is an extensive brush mode too that allows you to paint with patterns. You can also capture a block and resize it by stretching or compressing it. Or, if you prefer, you can flip it either horizontally or vertically. There is also a section of memory set aside as a buffer for your work screens where you can try out your ideas. Up to 12 full size screens are permitted on a 1040 and 2 on a 520 ST.

Since working with 512 colors can become a little overwhelming, there are three different kinds of color palettes: floating, fixed, and custom. These palettes are displayed in the side margins, and only one can be active at any one time. The floating palette is divided into 27 colors used for shading and 8 colors for blending. The fixed palette is similar to the floating, but you can keep the shading area fixed even when the active color is changed. The custom palette allows the artist to mix up to 196 possible colors. This palette has a special palette editor too. Not only does this editor allow precise mixing of RGB values, but has the ability to effect color changes either globally or locally. This means when you change a color, you do not have to change it wherever it occurs in your picture, but only where you want it to change.

Another nice feature of SPECTRUM 512 is its ability to load in other picture formats such as NEOCHROME, DEGAS, and AMIGA IFF files. Once captured by SPECTRUM, you can add any color enhancements to these pictures that you wish. There is even a program included with SPECTRUM that allows you to convert a SPECTRUM picture to the DEGAS file format. Of course you will not get 512 colors, but the program attempts to make the closest color approximations to the original work that it can. Finally, there is a slide show so that you can give your SPECTRUM pictures to others to enjoy even if they do not own the SPECTRUM program.

Obviously, SPECTRUM 512 is an impressive paint program. However, there are some things about it that could be improved. I dislike the way the color matrix selection is done from the seven hexagon display. If you click with the right mouse button on the lower half of the screen, this palette pops up. On the other hand, it you are on the upper half of the screen when you hit the right mouse button, the menu bar comes up instead. Needless to say, one frequently gets one menu when he really wants the other. To make matters worse, you can easily lose the color you were using if you are not careful when the color hexagons surprisingly pop up by mistake. The magnify mode also could use some refinement. It is activated and de-activated by "bumping" first one side of the screen and then the other. This is inelegant and clumsy. A better method should be used. In general, this is symptomatic of several problems I have with SPECTRUM's user interface which I believe could be improved with just a little more effort.

While SPECTRUM 512 includes many new drawing features, some that you would expect to be there are missing. One of these, unfortunately, is a text mode. To add text to your work you will have to use some other drawing program first, and then load the incomplete picture into SPECTRUM for finishing. You should also be aware that if you have one of the older ST's that was produced prior to December 1985, you may need to have a new MMU chip installed in order for SPECTRUM to work correctly.

In summary, SPECTRUM 512, with its many advanced features, clearly establishes a new level of performance for paint programs on the ST. The fast dissemination of SPECTRUM pictures on public information utilities and local BBS's attest to its eager acceptance by the Atari ST community. There is no doubt, however, that this remarkable accomplishment will also inspire others to ask the question:

"Why only 512 colors?"

Tanglewood

by Tom T. Tjarnberg

Your Uncle Arthur has a serious problem. It seems that he had the deed proving that he is the sole owner of the planet T'ngl-y-wd, a small planet with no real redeeming features purchased by him at closeout prices. Unknown to the previous owners the planet is rich with something called "dog crystals". Once thought useless, these crystals have the power to absorb nuclear energy and toxins, giving them great military significance. Another previously ignored mineral, the "ice-emerald", has been shown to be of value by virtue of its' heat absorbing properties. Now the previous owners have restored their base on the planet and stolen Uncle Arthurs deed of ownership and sent out Disruptor Mobiles to damage Uncle Arthurs robots and prevent him from finding the stolen deed. If he can not find the deed of ownership within 10 days the Inter-Galactic Court will have him thrown out. Of course there is big money to be made here and the old owners want it all for themselves.

Fortunately for Uncle Arthur, you are a computer whiz and he begs you for help in trying to discover the lost documents within the 10 days. His former Mobile Operator has vanished and with your knowledge of computers you surely will be able find the lost deed. Armed with your notes on the planet left by the previous operator you set out to solve the mysteries of T'ngl-y-wd and defend your Uncle Arthur against the powers of big business.

This is the scenario of a new interactive entertainment release from MICRODEAL U.S.A. ***TANGLEWOOD***, named after the planet and so called because nobody can pronounce *T'ngl-y-wd* except the natives, is mostly a graphics only adventure game. All input and interaction with the program is done with the mouse and the only text seen is in a few reply windows that report results of your interaction with the ***TANGLEWOOD*** mobile control computer. Your main game screen consists of a 2-dimensional view of the planet surface as viewed through your monitor screen. Around this screen are circles depicting up to three objects you are carrying and a fourth circle which displays any object your robot is over. At the upper right of the screen is a picture of your current robot and under the picture are three toggle switches which allow you to show what type of program data your mobile has at its' disposal, tell you where the mobile is or activate a time warp feature to advance the clock by 12 hours. Under the main view screen are more switches that allow you to pause, quit, save or load up to five game positions and turn off the game sounds. The reality of this game is greatly enhanced by the outstanding look of this screen. You really feel like you are controlling some kind of advanced multi-purpose alien computer.

To begin the game you activate one of your five robots by clicking on its' indicator number. All your communication with the mobiles is in the form of data transmitted from the on board mobile computer to your operations computer. Most of the time you are treated to a 2-dimensional view of the planet and all its' features. Roads, rivers, lakes, gardens, mazes, rock slides and more are shown along with a view of your robot as he travels over the terrain in search of clues to the planet and the location of the deed. The 2-dimensional view of the world is quite accurate and what you see is really what is out there. A second type of view is also available for certain locations and is transmitted to you by what the computer calls Ritter-Pavlovsky Transfer. You are treated to a 3-dimensional view of forests, tunnels, trees, riverbeds and so on. The only problem is that you are seeing an approximation of what is there. The mobile analyzes the scanned data and sends you back a picture of what it thinks it is seeing. So a lot of your travel through these 3-D mazes consists of quite similar views and going forward doesn't mean that you necessarily will go forward due to time delays in the data transmission. This makes navigation in these areas quite hard and since most of the areas have significance you must attempt to go through all the 3-D areas. The planet surface views on the other hand are quite easy to map and you will find you can get around quite easily after a few play sessions.

With your robots you must search the entire planet for items useful in your search for the deed. You will find many objects laying about such as credit cards, batteries, a shovel and several others and all have some use. Often a combination of objects must be used to solve a puzzle in order to allow you to progress with the game. Objects are easily picked up and you may carry up to three at a time. A program carried by each robot allows you to transfer objects from robot to robot as certain objects may be more useful to one robot that another.

As for the robots, you start the game with only four out of five since the antenna for robot #4 has been stolen. When your robots roll or walk over something hidden you will hear a "bing" sound and if you stop the robot the object you have discovered will be viewed in a window on your screen. You can then pick up the object by dragging it to one of your three carrying windows. Be sure to leave the sound on while playing this game or you will never know when you have discovered anything! Also each one of your robots has some defect and so coordination of all 5 robots is necessary. In addition there are Disruptor Mobiles sent out by the former owners that have the ability to disable four of your robots. Robot #5 is immune to the Disruptors but he has his own problems.

Add to this over 700K of graphics and game information and you have a program with much to offer. There are plenty of things to do as you explore ***TANGLEWOOD*** and discover its' secrets. There are 2 and 3 dimensional mazes, underground mines, forests and buildings to explore and many puzzles. All in all this is quite an enjoyable program. Now for my complaints. The control scheme is not the best. You control your robots with the mouse by rolling it in the direction you wish to go. However the robot doesn't always go in the intended direction and the mouse button doesn't always stop the robot in the right place. It is possible to get used to the controls but since all the turns are at 90 degree angles it would be simple to implement the cursor controls for direction changes and the insert or undo key to stop the robot motion. As for the 3-D mazes, they are just exercises in frustration. You can not drop objects you are carrying in the mazes to help with mapping and I haven't found an easy way to map them out. I did find one house within the forest

continued on page 10

Terrific Corp's EZRAM II

Terrific Corp. is pleased to annouce EZRAM II a 512k to 2.5 meg upgrade for the 520st, 520stfm, and 1040 the sequel to the successful EZRAM 520 (over 3000 sold). A quick **solderless** in stallation gives you the ability to upgrade your machine to 1 meg using inexpensive 256k chips, or all the way up to 2.5 meg using 1 meg chips.

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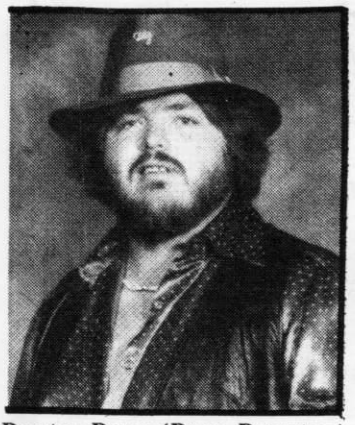
terrific PERIPHERALS



Doctor Dave (Dave Brewton)

VIDEO VEGAS

by Doctor Dave

You deserve a good time, right? After all, you work hard on the job and put up with the boss from 9 to 5. Isn't it about time to take that vacation you can never afford, but desperately need? Well, now you can! The distance you will travel is as far as the distance between your most comfortable easy chair and your (hopefully handy) ST computer. Shove your wife in the closet, throw your kids in the garage and lock the dog in the trunk of the car. Sit down, kick off your shoes and relax because the time has come to jump on the next Atari ST flight to Las Vegas.

So what am I rattling on about? It is nothing more than my excitement over Video Vegas from Baudville software. This my friends, is a genuine gamblers dream. You can actually gamble away $1,000.00 (or more) while never having to worry about calling somewhere collect for a bus ticket so you can get home after losing all the money in your wife's checking account and depleting all the funds in the savings account you were never supposed to know existed.

I strongly suggest you purchase this program for your software library. I guarantee, you will enjoy it!

Upon booting the program to the screen, you are greeted by a dazzling display of the Las Vegas Strip (simulated, naturally) at night. This intro screen is complete with bright flashing neon lights and cars "cruising" up and down the street. By this time, you will probably have a mouth watering urge to go out and gamble. Well, you can and it is fantastically easy as usual.

You have four different games to choose from. They include LUCKY 7 SLOT MACHINE, DRAW POKER, KENO, and BLACKJACK. To start the game of your choice, simply move your mouse arrow to the casino marque displaying the game you are interested in playing and click directly on the game title. After a few mere seconds you will be gambling like crazy.

All the games can be played with either the Keyboard or the Mouse. The ESC key takes you back to the main title screen when you get tired of a particular game or find you are broke. Each game offers the option to review the payoff's and display the odds of the game you are currently playing. Now let's go gamble a little on the Lucky 7 Slot Machine.

You can set your bet value by clicking on the BET button or pressing the number 1,2 or 3 keys on the Keyboard. My preference is to click on the coin slot and watch the coins drop into the machine. This game even comes fully equipped with a clanking noise (as each coin drops) that all serious slot addicts have grown so accustomed to hearing. After depositing your coins, just click on the handle or press RETURN and watch them bells, plumbs and cherries roll. It works just like a real slot machine. If you "hit" the right combination, the machine will pay off. The coins actually fall into the tray located at the bottom of the machine.

I think I can hear the kids trying to pry open the garage door.

The next game we want to look at, DRAW POKER, lets you bet from $1.00 to $5.00 on each hand. After placing your bet (either with the Mouse or Keyboard), simply click on the PLACE BET & DEAL or press RETURN to deal the cards. But, watch out. The dealer is very slippery and he likes to win. To draw new cards click on the card (my favorite) or the HOLD/DRAW button below it to turn the card over. This is one game I can usually win. When the game is booted, you receive $1,000.00 in playing money and hopefully you will be able to win enough money to bring that total above $1,000.00 before you quit. Each time I played, my final score was a mere $50.00 in pocket change. I love to gamble and at times my gambling is a bit on the careless side. Of course, as with all games of a gambling nature, there is a certain amount of skill and a tremendous amount of luck involved.

The next game on the marque for us to examine is Keno. As with the other games, you can set your bet with either the Mouse of the Keyboard. Select up to 15 numbers by clicking on each individual number of your choice. Don't worry. You are only allowed to choose a maximum of 15 numbers in this Keno game and the program will stop you from requesting more than 15. Once you have your 15 numbers, click on PICK AND PLAY or hit RETURN and watch the winning numbers light up. I won a bundle the first time I played this, but soon lost my pants. That goes to show you, there is some truth is the old saying, "quit while you're ahead". How many of you have ever done that in Las Vegas? The "*CLEAR THE BOARD*" option allows you to choose 15 different numbers if you're loosing with the numbers you are currently playing.

Last but not least is Blackjack. I found I am not any better at Blackjack on the computer than I am with the real card game. At the beginning of every Blackjack game, you have the option of choosing the number of decks you wish the dealer to use by clicking on the number or pressing the number 1 to 4 keys on the Keyboard. You must place your bet before you begin each hand. Be advised, once the dealing starts, you can not change your bet. To place your bet, simply click on BET and scroll up or down for the amount you wish. Then click on PLACE BET AND DEAL or press RETURN to deal the hand. After you receive your first two cards, you have the option of standing with those two cards or requesting additional cards. Just remember, as in the real Blackjack game, if cards total over 21, you bust and the dealer wins. You are allowed to bet up to $20.00 on each hand but be careful. It is possible to deplete your money rather quickly at 20 bucks a wack.

Video Vegas is the first software release for the ST line from this software company and hopefully not their last. The graphics are some of the best I've seen, and this game is a real winner in my book. I will be looking forward to additional products for the ST, from this company, in the near future. Video Vegas was entertaining as well as challenging. It's also just possible this program could be an important tool for a person who is interested in sharpening their gambling skills before taking on the real thing.

I could easily have played this game

continued on page 21

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(GFA Artist) contains every possible graphic and animation function one could possibly ever use..." (ST World, Sept. 87).

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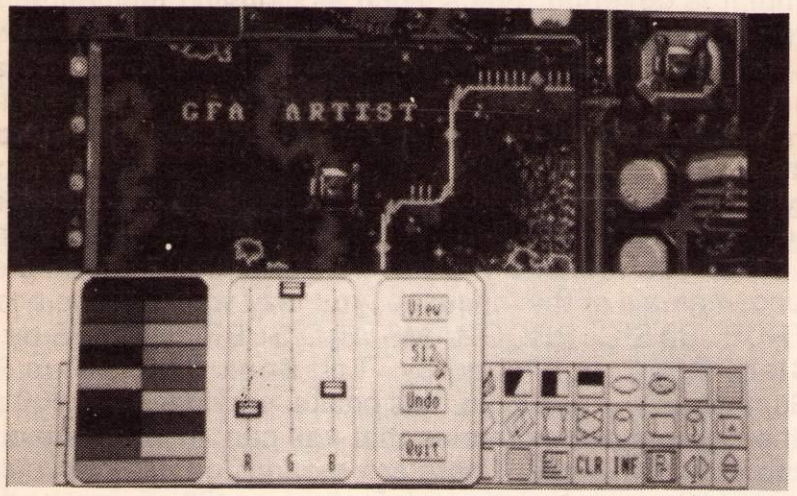

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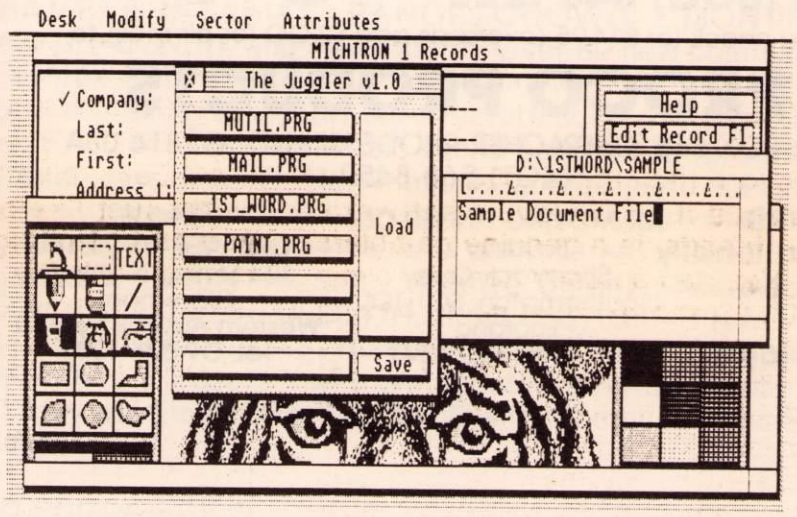

Loading an application is simply a matter of clicking the Load button in *The* **Juggler**'s *Switch Board* window and selecting the desired application from a standard *File Select Box*. You can even save a set of programs to disk so they will be loaded automatically the next time *The* **Juggler** is run.

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TRUE BASIC
BOOKS & SUPPORT

by Victor T. Albino

TRUE BASIC comes with a fine 331 page general reference manual that is intended for use with all the computers supported by this new language. Whether you have an Atari ST, Apple Macintosh, Amiga, or IBM PC, you will be able to use the same manual since one of the advantages of the TRUE BASIC design is its portability among these popular machines. However, it is obvious that each type of computer also has its own special features that are not shared with the other machines. For this reason, TRUE BASIC includes another manual of 115 pages as a special guide to those capabilities enjoyed only by the Atari ST. Together these two books provide a good foundation upon which to begin programming with TRUE BASIC. But where does one go after he has read these books and learned the fundamentals? Or where can the beginning programmer get more help, additional details about topics from a different point of view, and more examples of programs to study? Fortunately, a number of resources exist.

TRUE BASIC has a tape available that is entitled: **"INTRODUCTION TO TRUE BASIC PROGRAMMING."** Your host is none other than the inventor of BASIC, John G. Kemeny. Although Professor Kemeny uses an IBM PC for his examples, almost everything he says can be applied directly to the Atari ST. It is quite nice to be able to sit back and watch the examples being entered, run, and then explained. This is definitely one of the easiest ways to begin learning about TRUE BASIC. The price for this convenience is steep, however, at $99.

Although the video tapes give one a nice overview, they cannot provide the depth needed for mastering TRUE BASIC. If you intend to really learn this new language, you will have to read and practice. There are many good books available at your local bookstore, or from TRUE BASIC, INC. One of these is STRUCTURED BASIC PROGRAMMING by Kemeny & Kurtz, published by John Wiley & Sons, New York. This large format book assumes that the reader has no prior experience with BASIC, and gently guides him through all the fundamentals of TRUE BASIC. Intended to be adaptable for classroom use, there is a summary and list of appropriate exercises at the end of each chapter. The book also contains many programming examples and is nicely indexed. It sells for $28.

Another good book is STANDARD BASIC PROGRAMMING WITH TRUE BASIC by Avery Catlin, published by Prentice--Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, NJ. Also aimed at the beginning programmer, this book starts slowly and builds until it is covering topics such as handling multidimensional arrays, programming with matrices, computer graphics, and file handling. Each chapter ends with a list of important points to remember, self test questions, and practice programs. The extensive appendix includes such things as the ASCII character set, run-time error numbers and messages, keyboard codes, TRUE BASIC reserved words and commands, and other handy information. The price is $24.

After you feel like you have a good understanding of the fundamentals of the language, you may want to take a look at TRUE BASIC, PROGRAMS AND SUBROUTINES by John Clark Craig, published by Tab Books, Inc., Blue Ridge Summit, PA. For $16.95, this books provides over 200 pages of programs and examples that you can incorporate directly into your own work. There are sections on file manipulation, probability and statistics, electronics, utilities, mathematics, and many other topics. Whether your interest is in drawing 3-dimensional images, studying combinations and permutations, or using Ohm's Law, you will find a TRUE BASIC computer program on that topic in this book.

Books really are indispensable with it comes to learning the specifics of a language, but they often do not provide the most timely information. In order to keep in touch with the most current knowledge, something like a newsletter is needed. TRUE BASIC NOTES is a newsletter published by the Independent User Groups of TRUE BASIC. It is put out every other month and provides reviews, articles, and the latest news about the language. A subscription to the IUGTB NEWSLETTER costs $20 per year ($15 for students) and is available from the IUGTB, 4814 Mill Park Court, Glen Allen, VA 23060.

In conclusion, there are several sources available to the individual seeking to learn more about TRUE BASIC. In fact, a visit to your local bookstore may well reveal new books on TRUE BASIC that were not covered here. Because of the modular nature of TRUE BASIC, and the possibilities of exchanging useful libraries among computer users, it is likely that even more resources will be forthcoming. As one of the new breed of BASIC's for some of today's most powerful microcomputers, it would appear that TRUE BASIC will be a viable and well supported language for some time.

the SLASHER!!

How to avoid getting bit by a computer virus

by Michael Nowicki

A lot of attention has been given in the media lately about computer viruses and some of the havoc they can play. The computer virus (hackus fatalis) comes in two basic strains; the unintended bug and the deliberate worm. Every program ever written displays numerus bugs during it's normal development process. By the time the program is released in it's finished form most of the apparent bugs have been found and fixed. But some escape notice until some user trys to do something in a way that was not anticpated by the programmers. However the other strain is more insidious because it's actually designed to do damage to the system, usually to data files on disk. When we hear about some big corporation being bitten by a virus bug or even another user getting zapped we can afford to smile or even chuckle a little as long as it happens to someone else. My favorite story is when somehow, somewhere, someone got into the master computer system that lets all the IBM offices worldwide talk with each other. It's quite an elegant setup and each user has a built in software phone book at their terminal of often called numbers to be used for autodialing. What happened is that some Scrooge got a case of the holiday card frenzy and sent everyone in it's phone book a Merry Christmas message. A hook was also implanted in the master controller so that when a terminal received that message it would also send out the same message to every number in it's own phone book. Before long there was an electronic logjam of emmense proportions and for all intents and purposes the system was inoperative. Ho, ho, ho..... Just a couple of years ago there was the story about how the IRS computers were mysteriously deleting taxpayer records. The official excuse was that their new computer system didn't have all the bugs out yet but if you also heard the accounts of mass employee dissatisfaction you have to wonder if just maybe the bugs weren't planted on purpose. Ask any sysop and sure enough they'll have a horror story to tell about a program that was uploaded by someone and downloaded by numerous callers only to find that their free public domain software wiped out their entire hard disk or at best just a floppy with some other downloads on it. Many sysops will screen new uploaded programs before putting them out for general distribution but don't count on it. What's worse is that just about anyone with even a limited knowledge of programming can write a destructive program. By tempting fate a little I will present an example of a one line program that is guarenteed to wreck havoc. It is presented for the purpose of example only and I advise you to not try compiling and running it. I have left out the include files for brevity and to make it a little harder for a devious novice programmer to breathe life into the monster.

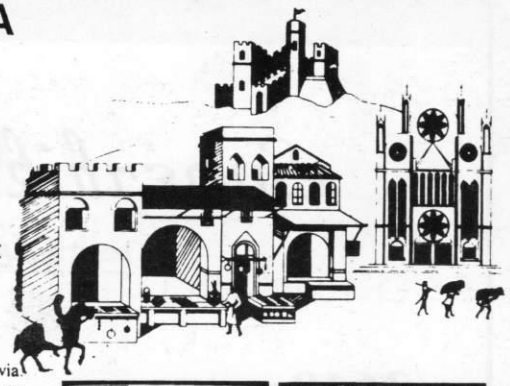
```
/* ------------------ SLASHER.C ------------------------
   *  Deletes all files from the disk it is booted from
   *  DANGER!!  EXTREME HAZARD!!  DO NOT
      COMPILE!!    */  main()
{
 while( unlink("*.*") != -1 ); }   /*
------------------------------------------------------ */
```

DO NOT RUN THIS - IT IS FOR ILLUSTRATION ONLY!!

This little program written in C is a real terrorist. As you load the program from disk the disk motor spins as usual but it doesn't stop. It just keeps going and by the time you wonder why your disk hasn't stopped running it's too late. Your files are gone. The real purpose of this article is to present a few guidelines for trying out software obtained from an unreliable source or of unknown origin. When you have new software to try out that was not purchased new off a store shelf it's wise to disconnect your hard disk if you have one. Test run your new programs from a floppy disk only. If you have two drives only put a disk in the second drive that you don't care about in it so if things go bonkers all you might lose is the disk of new downloads. Better yet, copy the untested program to another disk all by itself so if it's a virus all it will destroy is itself. Be on the lookout for programs with names that entice you to try them first. Names like X_RATED.PRG, TRY_ME.PRG or WONDER.PRG. **Beware of programs small in size but large in implied functions.** For instance, GRAFDEMO.PRG might lead you to believe it's a nifty graphic eye sugar program but if it's only 1K long. Hmmmmm. A couple of years ago I came across a program for the TRS-80 Color Computer on a BBS. I never got around to running it (thankfully!) but a couple of friends did. The program claimed to be a disk catalog program for organizing your program library. You simply booted up the program and the program prompted you to keep inserting disks. It was suppossed to read the directory of each disk and build up a cross referenced index of all your programs. It even had the capability to enter a comment line to describe what each program was for. Not bad, huh? Especially for free! The program had an attractive and well designed user interface that inspired confidence. Well, what it really did was erase all the files on each disk, all the while the user thought they were on the road to finally organizing their disk library when in fact they were losing it all. Most virus programs attack your disk drives and the valuable data on them. It's difficult if not impossible for software do damage your computer hardware. The bottom line is to treat every piece of new public domain software you get as a slasher program until proved otherwise. That way you can be pretty sure of not being the butt of a devious programmer's joke.

SANTA PARAVIA AND FIUMACCIO

The New Graphic



ENTER A FEUDAL CITY-STATE IN ITALY AND EMERGE AS THE RULER OF A POWERFUL EUROPEAN EMPIRE

Buon giorno, signore!

Welcome to the province of Santa Paravia. As your steward, I hope you will enjoy your reign here. I feel sure that you will find it, shall we say, profitable.

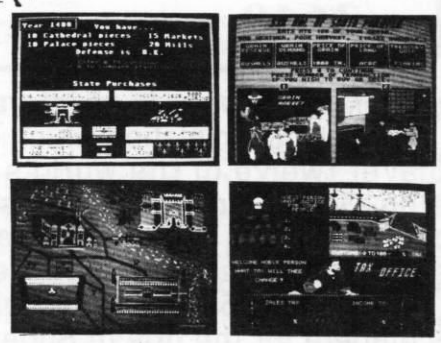
The year is 1400 AD, and you are the ruler of a tiny Italian city-state. You are ambitious by nature and intend to build your little city-state into a powerful kingdom.

So begins Santa Paravia and Fiumaccio, where you and your fellow players compete as rulers of neighboring cities. You control the grain harvest, feed your people, set tax rates, exercise justice, and invest in public works.

Life was short back then, and you'll have only a limited amount of time in which to build your kingdom. The lives of your serfs will depend on your decisions. If they are wise, then your city-state will grow and you will acquire loftier titles. If your rule is incompetent, your people will starve and your city-state may be invaded by your neighbors.

You can play the game yourself or up to six players may compete at the same time. Either way, you're sure to find your route to the throne a challenging road.

How will you rule your kingdom? Will you become unscrupulous and follow the example set by Niccolo Machiavelli in his book on government, *The Prince*, — or will you be a benevolent ruler — an iron fist in a velvet glove? Only you can answer that question — with the Santa Paravia and Fiumaccio program.



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Superbike Challenge

by Bob Mulholland

2649

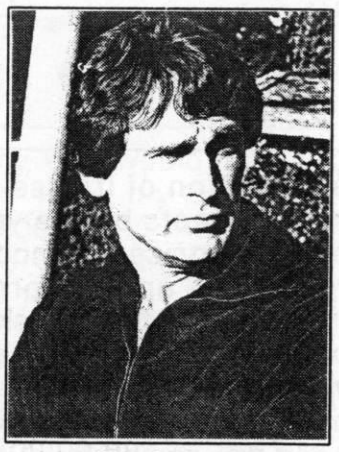
Superbike Challenge is an interactive superbike racing simulation which offers the player twelve of the world's most exciting Grand Prix race courses to choose from. It is offered to Atari ST owners from Broderbund Software, Inc. for a price of $19.95. One or two players may compete for the title of Superbiker in the International World Championship races. Each player receives his own screen in which to drive around the course. A split-screen lets each player have his own perspective with Bike #1 on the left side of the screen and Bike #2 on the right side. In the one player mode the computer takes control of the other bike and four additional motorcycles. Whereas in the two player mode the computer controls the remaining four motorcycles. The four computer-controlled riders appear to have different personalities. They all don't behave alike on the course and some appear to be better computer opponents than others. Each motorcycle is controlled by either the keyboard or joystick. The keyboard is not a realistic input device for real time games. Keyboards were meant for word processors and databases not arcade action games. However, the joystick offers a terrific interface for motorcycle racing. The joystick aids the player in navigating all the turns which jump out at the player going at speeds up to 200 mph.The screen offers a wealth of information on the race at hand. An instrument panel displays your speed, RPM (revolutions per minute), lap count, race position and your order as compared with the rest of the bikers. Your race position is displayed on a map of the course layout. However, only Bike #1 and Bike #2 are displayed on the course layout. It would have been more helpful if all six of the bikes were displayed on the map so that the player would know just how far away the other bikers are from him.4-Superbike Challenge0- offers three levels of challenge: Novice, Intermediate or Pro. I did not notice a significant increase in difficulty between the Novice and Pro levels. The Pro level seemed to cause the motorcycle to more easily crash into the barriers alongside the race course and the joystick did seem less responsive at this level. However, I was able to complete all 12 races at the Pro level without much more difficulty than the Novice level. This is not to say that *Superbike Challenge* is easy, only that each of the levels appear similar. *Superbike Challenge* requires an ever increasing amount of skill to complete. Players may choose to race on 12 authentic International Grand Prix courses in one of three ways: run five laps in individual races, practice one lap in individual races and then run them or run all 12 Grand Prix races in the International World Championship. If you choose the last option you must complete all 12 races in order to win the title of Superbiker. While running these 12 races you can stop, save the game on a blank disk, and restart the next race after each Grand Prix race is completed. I commend Microids, the author of *Superbike Challenge*, for their insight in not requiring the player to save the game to the original disk. The game can be saved to any formatted disk so that nothing happens to your original disk. However, the program is copy-protected, a practice I feel should be eradicated by game manufacturers. Broderbund Software offers a ninety (90) day free replacement period and backup copies can be obtained for five dollars ($5.00) plus a postage and handling charge of $2.50 per request, as long as the program is still being manufactured by Broderbund.The only real complaint I have with 4-Superbike Challenge0- is the user documentation. The manual offers an Overview, Loading instructions and Superbike control instructions. This may seem like enough but it isn't. After reading the manual I felt like I didn't know everything I needed to know to play the game. For example, I couldn't understand how to save the game because it wasn't explained how to do so. I finally figured it out that you can only save your game while running all 12 races; individual races cannot be saved. The reason for this is that you can't save the game while your racing, only after each race course is completed.In summary, I recommend *Superbike Challenge* to those people who just can't get enough of high speed racing simulations. At a price of $19.95 this program is worth the money. *Superbike Challenge* can be obtained from Broderbund Software, Inc., 17 Paul Drive, San Rafael, CA 94903-2101.

continued from page 5

Tanglewood

so far but have found nothing under water, in the underground tunnels or in the treetop maze. Also, some of the puzzles require some of that convoluted logic that only twisted programmers seem to be able to solve. Here is one sequence from the hint sheet that the company sent me, so don't read on unless you want to find out a solution. To get into an earthquake zone you must get by some holes in the ground. The holes actually looked like bumps to me and since one of the robots has a broken jump program I figured you had to fix that and then jump over the area. Not so! You have to get some seeds from the local residents(another puzzle), plant them at a certain location in one of the many gardens near a well, go away for 24 hours until the plants grow, walk over to the well and get the bucket, then find a shovel somewhere and dig up the sand and cement in one of the rockpiles and take the sand, cement and bucket to the "hole" and repair it! Now, there is no reason for me to think that planting the seeds in that particular location will do anything and no real clue is given in the game so you just have to stumble on that puzzle solution. Several of the puzzles are like this detract from the playability and enjoyability of the game. MICRODEAL does have one solution and it will be available at some point. In defense of the game apparently one of their playtesters solved the whole thing in a day and a half so it is possible but I like my games to have logical puzzles that most reasonable people can figure out!

TANGLEWOOD comes on 2 disks, with disk "A" being so heavily copy protected that even MICRODEAL can not make a back up copy. The documentation consists of an excellent and essential manual that gives you much of the information necessary to complete the game. The program supports 2 drives and will load as much of its' data as it can into the available memory on a 1040. If you have only 1 drive then be sure to leave disk A in the drive except when prompted for disk B. Otherwise the game will lock up. Five save positions are allowed on a separate save disk. You will want to save the game frequently and since you have 10 game days to solve the puzzles you will use this feature a lot. With only slight reservations I can give ***TANGLEWOOD*** my seal of approval. *The graphics are excellent, the play unique and the point of view unusual. It is not the easiest game to solve but is quite a programming achievement and well worth the $39.95 list price.* For more information contact MICRODEAL, U.S.A., 576 S. Telegraph, Pontiac, Michigan, 48053, phone 313-334-8729.



Bill Cafarelli

Logistik

by Bill Cafarelli

From Webster's New Universal Dictionary; Logistic, the Greek logistikos, skilled in calculating, logistes, a calculator, logizesthai, to compute.

There are a lot of spreadsheets out there. Some are basic number crunchers, while others are serious applications specifically geared for business and professional user. "LOGISTIK" by Grafox falls into this latter category, a heavy hitter.

Spreadsheets have been the top selling software program for years. According to Dataquest, Inc. a market research firm owned by Dun & Bradstreet, for every 14 computers purchased there were 10 spreadsheet programs acquired. Rounding out the top four, the word processor came in a close second with 9, followed by the graphics package with 4, and the database with 2.4. All others lagged far behind.

It would seem desirable to have as many of these implementations as possible, together in one package. Variations of this idea have indeed been done. Early on, a separate program could be used, such as a graphics utility, which would read the spreadsheet files and produce charts and graphs. Or a database program could be purchased that would allow you to read spreadsheet data into it, and then write "common" database like files that could be read back into the spreadsheet.

Happily though, as computer memory leaped out of the 128-256k area into the 640+k realm, combined packages were born. Things became truly integrated when all applications ran from one program.

LOGISTIK is a fully integrated program. Combining Database, Graphics, and an interesting new concept of Time Management into the Spreadsheet environment. This time function includes such concepts as resource allocation, task scheduling, and project planning. Because it is truly integrated, most of the commands and menus used, as well as the getting around techniques, operate under one controlling program, in this case the Spreadsheet.

The art of "logistics" can be the difference between winning and loosing, whether in war or in the accounting department. General George S. Patton, perhaps the best logistics expert of WW2, was exaggeratedly credited with "having moved two hundred tanks and three thousand soldiers, nine hundred miles in three days." This was accomplished with only "ten gallons of gasoline and one mess truck in the dead of european winter."

This LOGISTIK's package is designed to solve just such a problem. It comes in a 6 by 9 binder of the kind that can be laid flat. The two disks are contained in a "open me first" envelope in the back of the booklet. Found herein are also the warranty card and license agreements, with all those annoying disclaimers etc. The product is marketed in this country by Progressive Peripherals & Software, 464 Kalamath St. Denver, Colorado 80204. Phone them at (303) 825-4144 for technical support.

The most immediate document contained in this packet is the Atari Logistix Addendum. Because the formal manual itself was written for the IBM version, the Addendum explains the Atari loading and first run of the program, and an explanation of the two versions (1 meg with graphics, and a 520 or junior version without.) It also has the Atari "Special Keys" list on the last page, keep this handy when you begin using the program.

The 1.15 version tested here was the "New! Min. 1 Meg." edition. On the first page of the addendum it is recommended that you copy both disks, a wise suggestion indeed, and should be applied to all your software. Logistix can also be installed on a hard disk, and is thus not copy-protected, we thank GRAFOX for this courtesy.

By now you are wondering whether this program is spelled Logistik or Logistix, all I can tell you is it depends on where in the documentation you are looking, from now on let's use the Logistix (with an x) spelling.

Also supplied to us is a complete and indis- pensable "Quick Reference" guide and "Function Key Template," two very thought-ful additions. The manuals themselves are well written and quite thorough, and minimal confusion will result from references to pounds instead of dollars, and of course Big Blue.

Please note: one word of caution. The 1.1 "Examples" manual and learning disk does have a few confusing references to data that is to be filled in by the student, as practice during the tutorial. Not only is this data already included in the tables, but it is somewhat different than that illustrated in the booklet's pictures. The dollar sign has also been substituted for the pound symbol in the disk file. The rest of the tour in the Examples section was quite easy to follow, and it will have you up and running in a few short hours.

Although this program is very sophisticated and intended for the experienced user, with some patience and practice, an elaborate spreadsheet utilizing graphics, database and time functions could be set up by anyone. Hopefully there will be template files for all kinds of applications available from GRAFOX and others, similar to those currently available for programs like Lotus 123, Multiplan, and DBASE. Just load'm up, add your own touches, and fill in the blanks.

LOTUS 123 & DBASE compatibility - A short note while we are on this template subject. If you use a modem or know someone who does, you will find many blank templates free, in the public domain file areas on database services such as Compuserve and Genie. Check the related SIGs (special interest groups) like IBM or Lotus.

If you are bringing home work files on Lotus 123 or DBASE, and you have the IBM 3 1/2 inch disks, then these files can be read into Logistix since the Atari drive may read (only) this format.

THE SPREADSHEET - Logistix is first of all a spreadsheet, within this structure all other functions are accessed, written to, read from, described, manipulated and printed. In this one program you can set up your checkbook, investments, income taxes, name and address list, business bookkeeping, payroll, recipes, household inventory, card file,

continued on page 12

continued from page 11

Logistik

depreciation schedules, even that european vacation, with all those "time" elements. All these can be cross referenced, and dependant upon one another, or independent, if such and such is the case. They can be charted, graphed, and asked "what if". Now if it only included a word processor... well... maybe the two meg edition will have it.

With Logistix you can set up several individual spreadsheets, each in their own named file. You could then have a master spreadsheet read in specific sections from each individual sheet, then manipulate the data depending on what criteria you've stipulated. The results can then be written to yet another file. If that's not enough, if desired, any changes to these other files that have resulted from this consultation with the master sheet, can be rewritten to each as necessary, and each time this particular sheet is run, combined informational graphics could be generated. Now that's powerful.

The Logistix spreadsheet is enormous, 2,097,152 cells in a 2048 row by 1024 column maximum size. The 80 column screen can typically only display 100 adjacent cells at a time. So when far flung parts of the sheet need to be worked on at the same time, the screen may be split either vertically or horizontally. These windows can be made dependant upon each other, the titles row or column can be made to freeze (allowing only the data rows or columns to move), and data changed cells can be set to recalculate automatically.

All the mathematical operations as well as the logical operators are supported, as are several specialized Financial functions, such as (IRR, NPR, FV, PV, PMT). Database functions like (DSUM, DCOUNT, DAVG, DMAX, DMIN) are available, and the Calendar functions (TOD, DAY, DOW, MON, MONTH, YEAR, DOM, DOMOY, NWEEK, NDAY, and would you believe DATE, and TIME) are included. Many Graphics commands are available and of course those Time functions (START, END, LENGTH, AFTER, and FLOAT).

Although a detailed explanation of these functions that may be unfamiliar to you is beyond the scope of this article, I assure you that most of them were previously only available in the step.

MACROS & AUTOS - These are worth mentioning, if only to demonstrate the power of Logistix. Let's say you have a small business manufacturing Thingamabobs. You could place the LGX.PRG in an auto folder on your disk, and because it is a TOS application it will load up when the ST is turned on. You could create a Macro named START, and it will begin spontaneously as Logistix is booted. This START Macro could give limited access, by password, to a specified area in the worksheet like the inventory section. Here the display would be customised with input screens, beeps, traps for incorrect data entry, auto printouts and even custom colors. A different password would allow access to the payroll area with its own set of particular entry displays and colors. All of these designated areas could be made dependant on each other, or their cross referenced material could be displayed in another passworded area.

This area may generate graphs and charts all by itself when certain criteria have been met, or it could produce a monthly summary sheet when all the waited entries have been made. It could even be programed to print out these reports on the last Friday morning of each month, even if some entries are missing. These lacking items could be inferred by some formula using projected analysis, or past performance. Magic? The Auto command more closely resembles the old fashioned macro, but is much more powerful. You may assign any number of "key strokes" to either the function keys, the alternate key combo or the control key combo. These may also include any of the programing controls, or even other Autos and Macros.

The DATABASE - Set aside a cell block, where your columns will hold the fields, and the rows will contain the records. The first row of this data cell block will hold the field's names. You have all the control over column size, inserting and deleting rows (records) and columns (fields), and automatic cell referencing and justification as in any other part of the spreadsheet.

The maximum database size is limited to 64 different fields (columns) with 2047 most sophisticated and expensive programs, typical of the DBASE and LOTUS variety, and once used and gotten used to, become indispensable.

Logistix is set up in the popular A, B, C across the top columns, and the 1, 2, 3 down the rows display. Although Logistix it is NOT GEM based, the command line at the bottom of the screen provides a very quick and easy way to use this type of interface. It is intuitive at times, offering you the most likely next choice of action, and while in the command (slash or /) level, it's full name and an explanation of the currently selected command is shown below the alphabetical choices. You may even hit the help key for a detailed explanation of its use. If you've used spreadsheets before you will undoubtedly recognize this modus operandi.

Setting up the spreadsheet is the hardest part, a rough sketch on a piece of graph paper ahead of time will help you get started. Begin entering your headings and change the column size as need be, remember you can slip in a new row or column at any time. If you later consider something to include, don't think of what you've done as "set in concrete". Unlike the earlier more primitive programs, changes can be made anytime and all cell references will be adjusted accordingly.

Entering formulas can be done by the grunt method, (a1+b1+c1+d1+e1+f1)/6 or by the cell reference method, and for this case, using the average function AVG(a1:f1). All of the cell references can be ranged (a1:c12) and formulas can be set up algebraically ((a1/b6)+(c1*d6)).

Column headings which are larger than the column size by the way, will be displayed in their entirety if a sufficient number of adjacent columns are vacant. You may set justification, denomination symbol, number of decimal places and even display colors. You will find all the power and amenities necessary to create the most demanding worksheet. There are a few commands which are incredible, one is the /XECUTE command. This allows you to set a right hand boundary for the "visible" worksheet, provides password protection for a defined area, enters Macro commands automatically, and executes Autos and Macros step by records (rows), or 131,000 items. You may move records and fields, change their format, edit their contents and set the field names to stay on the screen.

Sorting may be done on one, or any number of fields from the least to the most significant. For example, you could sort an address file so that the peoples names on each street were in alphabetical order, the streets were then in order, the cities were then in order, and then the states were listed alphabetically.

Although other singularly designed database programs could offer more power and flexibility than the Logistix database, it is full featured enough for most needs. The fact that these database cell blocks can be accessed to, and that they can read from the spreadsheet whole, gives this portion of the logistix package enormous flexibility.

THE TIMESHEET - Once you have specified the the time units for example days, and a working week say monday

continued on page 21

GFA Artist

by Micahel Nowicki

In the October 1987 issue of ST WORLD I had the fun of previewing a new software product for the ST. At the time it was called GFA FILM and wasn't in the stores yet. In fact it was an in-house beta version with bugs and rough edges but showing quite a lot of potential.

As I later found out, **ST WORLD** had scooped the slick paper ST magazines by acquiring the beta copy and telling you about it first. Now I hope we can do the same thing again by publishing the first review of the finished product that has since been renamed **GFA ARTIST**.

In a nutshell, GFA ARTIST is a graphic drawing program that lets you animate what you draw. It turns your ST into a dedicated animation computer and does tricks that will surprise you. More later on about what I mean when I say dedicated.

Minimum system requirements are 1MB RAM with TOS in ROM and a color monitor. Two single sided disks, not copy protected, contain the programs and the demo film.

GFA ARTIST operates in 2 resolution/color modes; normal low res 320 x 200 with a 16 color palette and an enhanced 1021 color cycling mode for enhanced display purposes. You can mix low res and medium res art but for the most part you operate and draw in the more colorful low res mode.

Most drawing programs assume the user to have some degree of artistic talent to begin with or are willing to spend countless hours learning how to draw with a mouse or with x-y coordinates. Some drawing programs allow color cycling that produce an attractive but limited animation effect.

Since there are hundreds of public domain picture files on BBS's, those users without art skill can have a ball cutting out parts of these pictures and putting them into action.

The program is divided into two areas, drawing and animation, each with it's own menu at the bottom of the current workscreen. Pressing ESC makes it vanish or reappear. The F1 and F2 keys toggle you back and forth between the menus. The menu selected with F2 lets you draw graphic primatives with functions like Pencil, Eraser, Line, Spraycan, Brush, Polygon, Elipse, Circle, Rectangle with either square or rounded corners, hollow or filled and a zoom drawing mode with two magnification factors, 4x and 8x. To those of you familiar with the inner working of the VDI within GEM, all of the graphic primative functions are here along with the various attributes that come with it. The resident VDI fill patterns and line types can be selected or you can create your own using the built in pattern editor and save them to disk for future use.

One of the most useful drawing tools is a Smear function with which you can blend the transition of two colors by smearing or blending the color pixels on the screen as if they were colored sand.

Text can be entered anywhere on the screen and moved around until you get it just right. A Roman font comes with the program and the font editor lets you create your own font characters from ascii 0 to 159. The editor uses a 16 x 16 grid to create the font with, while an attribute feature of the TEXT function allows you to change the height and width along with an italic effect.

If you already have a favorite drawing program you feel comfortable with like NEO, DEGAS or COLORSTAR you can easily import picture files created with those programs into GFA ARTISTusing the custom file selector box that uses radio buttons to specify the picture file type.

The drawing menu is composed of boxed icons that you highlight by holding down the left button and moving the mouse. To select a function you press the right mouse button. If you wish to change the color or fill pattern currently selected press the HELP button to bring up the possible attribute choices.

You use these drawing tools to create your background screen if one is desired and the basic sprites or pixel patterns that will later become animated and glide around your background screen as well as being able to exist in layers so that objects can move in front of or behind other objects. When you have an object like a doughnut passing in front of a cube you can see part of the cube through the doughnut hole. A helpful function called Lasso works something like an exacto knife to cut around the image border and any parts within the sprite that you want to see through.

Once you have the basic sprites drawn or cut out you can alter them through the use of an extensive variety of functions. This is where the program takes off and lets you have some real creative fun. 24 functions take your basic object and stretch it, zoom in or out in size in single or multiple steps, paste in onto a drum and spin it, bend it, paste it onto a globe, rotate, invert it and achieve some remarkable 3D effects. Imagine cutting a picture out of a magazine and with your hand move it around, make it closer or nearer, spin it, turn it on an angle. Just about anything you can do with the cutout and your imagination can be translated quickly and easily into a computer graphic presentation.

After you have your background screen and sprites designed you're ready to start making your film. By pressing F1 you get the other menu. Where the previously mentioned operations are easy to perform with only casual reference to the manual, you really have to sit down and study the manual while building your film to learn how the program wants you to tell it what your film should look like. Using the some conceptual techniques that hardcopy professional animation is created frame by frame using layers and small gradual changes to achieve the illusion of motion, so too here. Sprites can be organized into groups to simplify handling and conserve valuable memory space.

This frame by frame creation process has been greatly simplified and speeded up through the use of well thought out editing procedures. A novice just fooling around can get some good animation sequences while the experienced artist/animator can quickly translate their ideas into reality by letting the program do most of the grunt work.

At any point during the development of your film you can save any or all parts to disk. Each film is made of three main components; the background screen, the sprites and the frames. Each can be saved or loaded to disk independently of the others so one sprite file can be used with other film frames or backgrounds.

You can link frame files together that use the same sprites and produce animation sequences that could last for minutes without repetition. Your three film component files that are normally saved to disk separately can be saved as

continued on page 14

continued from page 13

GFA Artist

one big file to by displayed using a run only interpreter that has been released to the public domain. What this means is before long you can download from your favorite BBS complete animation films and run them even if you don't have a copy of GFA ARTIST.

The manual is a paperback book of about 100 pages with everything you need to know to operate the program simply and clearly explained. There's a tips and tricks section along with a short tuorial on how to make a quick and easy animation film within a few minutes. To really get into it and produce some near professional quality animation you will have to spend at least 20 hours learning how to use all the functions and editing tools provided so they become second nature to you.

Earlier on I mentioned about how GFA ARTISTturns your ST into a dedicated animation workstation. In the computer world 'dedicated' sometimes refers to a computer that is meant to to do one job only and nothing else. Examples of this could be a CAD workstation with a plotter and CAD software that boots up when you turn on the power.

GFA ARTIST temporaily makes your computer dedicated. The manual suggests that you cold start your computer before starting the program because other programs that you may have run since last boot up did'nt properly unreserve upon exit the memory it reserved upon entry. Because the GEM pull-down menu system is not used, any desk accessories in memory cannot be accessed and therefore take up memory that could otherwise be used by GFA ARTIST.

This program has no way to exit and return to GEM Desktop. You have to power down because the manual claims that the program changes so many system parameters that you would'nt want to exit and then try to fire up another program and get unpredictable results.

I see a potential problem with this setup in that the possibility of powering down without remembering to save your work is greatly increased. It would have been better to have a program terminate icon that checks to see if you saved your file since the last changes were made and then tells you to power down if they were.

On the other hand, the most obvious situation that might occur is when you draw a background screen with another program without powering down before running GFA ARTIST. Experiments running Degas, Degas Elite and Neochrome before running GFA ARTIST without powering down created no problems I could see. Many computer professionals power down between the use of major applications just to be on the safe side and lock Mr. Murphy out of the computer. It's not a bad idea for computer novices to be introduced to this practice.

Another potential problem is one of programming philosphy and upward compatability. ATARI Corp. constantly reminds software developers to program 'by the book' for the simple reason that if you don't, future versions of the ROMs could make your software break out with bugs. It's obvious that some interrupt vectors have been changed or bypassed entirely. Screen dumps that could previously be done with Alt-Help can only be done with a menu function. 1000 color cycling is very pretty but it's not 'by the book'.

Tests on both the ST and the Mega using several different ROM versions ran without problem and hopefully future versions won't run into any compatability problems.

All things considered I do not consider any of these aspects serious enough drawbacks to make this program unworthy of your purchase.

Quite the contrary. GFA ARTIST is one of perhaps half a dozen programs I have seen on the ST that delivers on the software end of the promise *"power without the price"*. Speaking of price, the suggested retail of $79.99 seems quite fair when compared to other ST drawing programs that do a whole lot less for more money.

If you've been waiting and saving your bucks for a program that exploits the graphic animation potential of the ST, demo this program at your dealer. Your wait may be over.

Infocom

"Plundered Hearts" & "Nord and Bert "

by Tom Tjarnberg

First the bad news. Infocom has recently announced that they will be supporting the ATARI ST less in the future due to less than adequate sales. It seems that the people who are buying the ST and Amiga machines are opting for more of the adventure games that include graphics and text or just graphics and forsaking the pleasures to be found within the imagination-created universe of the text adventure. They will not stop supporting the ST entirely but will limit the releases to just the major ones or those that take advantage of some of the special features of the ST such as digitized sound. I find this not only sad but kind of odd since Infocom supposedly has a game creation system that allows all of their programs to be easily ported to the various machines. Since their new release, BORDER ZONE, is already completed and available for the Apple, Commodore 64, IBM and Mac why not make it available for the ST, at least on a mail order basis. If you have ever tried one of their games you know how much fun they can be and to be denied access to their titles is kind of upsetting. Letting Infocom know your feelings might help in getting continued ST support. They have released BEYOND ZORK for the ST and are planning to release SHERLOCK:THE RIDDLE OF THE CROWN JEWELS with sound so at least the Infocom well has not dried up completely.

Now for the good news. In their quest to broaden the appeal of the all text adventure two recent releases forge into new areas. The first of these games, **"PLUNDERED HEARTS"**, offers a new twist. The main character of the game is female and all your input into the game controls her actions. This is not like LEATHER GODDESSES OF PHOBOS or MOONMIST where choosing a different gender resulted in such exciting things as using a different bathroom. No, you start out the adventure as a woman and must respond to all situations, both adventurous and romantic, as she would. Now this may be a bit weird for some of you but it certainly gives you a different perspective along with a chance to cross dress rather painlessly! I actually think that its about time that women were given a greater roll in the area of

continued on page 19

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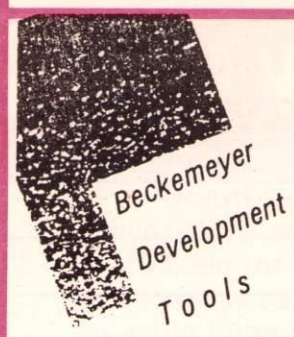

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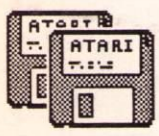

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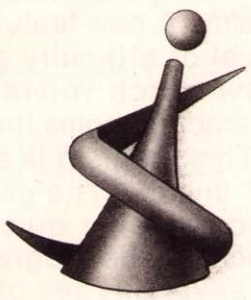

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RINGS OF ZILFIN

by Tom Tjarnberg

Strategic Simulations, Inc. has been one of the software firms that has supported the Atari series of computers throughout the years with a fine line of quality software. Even as all other firms were abandoning the 8-bit Atari line during 1984 S.S.I. continued to put out new titles for the computer. When the ST line came out S.S.I. began porting over some of its old titles as well as releasing new ones for the ST. This continued support is always welcome for the ST as many of the developers are currently re-evaluating their ST support. I'll get in my anti-piracy plug right now. If you have software you like, buy it. If you have software you have stolen and you are using it on a regular basis, buy it. If you need or want a particular type of software don't steal it and put someone else out of work, just quit your own full time job, put in the many hundreds of hours needed to learn how to program, then put in all the required hours to write the software you need. After you do all that, then give a copy to 1 person and see all your hard work and income go down the drain as your masterpiece is given away to all takers. Then you may think twice about stealing someone elses' hard work. Many of the ST products are written by individuals who really need the money they gain from software sales and *we need to show the industry and developers that the ATARI market is a viable one.* Enough preaching for today, now on the the review.

Rings of Zilfin is an attempt to create a unique gaming experience on the ST. It is a combination of several gaming elements into one package. You get a 3-D adventure with all the roll playing aspects of an Ultima or Phantasie type game along with some real time arcade action (would you believe Space Invaders?) and in most respects the elements all come together well to create an entertaining gaming experience. You have the task of ridding the land of Batiniq from the darkness of the plague of Lord Dragos. The wise Zilfin rulers have vanished along with all the good they brought to the land. Many tales have been told in the past of the two Zilfin rings and of the Treasure of Fulgarsh. Since you have been granted certain powers by your birthright it is your task to explore the three realms of Batiniq and hopefully restore goodness and light to the world.

From the opening screens of the game you know you are in for a good time. From out of the darkness of your monitor screen begins some mysterious music and then you are treated to a beautifully drawn title screen accompanied by the music of Dave Brubeck. Hope he told S.S.I. they could use his music! You are then presented with a chance to change the name of the main character. Just type in what you want and hit return. Now the game begins with a 3 dimensional look at your home village. You have been warned of danger and have but a few minutes to flee before an attempt is made to destroy you. Running out of your hut you escape just in time and set off on your journey into the world of Batiniq.

You find yourself on a pathway with scrolling graphic above and below you as you wander for several days and nights until you reach the next village. At night you must rest and must also be on the watch for the night birds that attack in Space Invaders style and must all be destroyed. If only 1 escapes you have to fight another group. Luckily you have plenty of arrows! Along the road you may find pools of water to drink from or plants to gather. In addition there are mysterious individuals to talk to. One muttered the cryptic slogan "power without the price" to me as we talked. Maybe that is some secret clue to business success, but I'm not sure. Upon reaching the village you may explore the buildings there or talk to the residents. Within the buildings you may find supplies, an inn for a nights lodging or a fight with the fanatics guarding the treasure. After your adventures in the village you set out on the road once again to travel to the next area of interest as you unravel the mysteries of the land and try to restore order.

This game has an excellent user interface. Virtually all commands are mouse driven and you have a menu area present at all times on the right hand side of the screen. Any necessary actions may be performed by rolling the mouse which highlights the current menu choice and a click performs the action. You also have available a map of the land with a flashing cursor showing your current location, along with the save and load choices so necessary in games of this type. All fighting is also done with the mouse. Just roll the mouse to the direction you wish to fight in and press the button. If you have a sword and wish to use it you must of course select it first. Also available is a screen that shows your characters current statistics and possessions carried. This screen is also used to select which things to eat and use. Just roll the mouse and make your selection. This interface allows you quick and easy access to all game functions and makes play quite easy.

As in most games of this type you must collect things along the way. Plants in particular, especially mushrooms, play an important role and you must learn the uses of each. You also have magic and must prepare spells for use as well as determine the correct situation for the best use of each.

The documentation accompanying RINGS OF ZILFIN is excellent and provides you with all the details you need to play the game. A history of the land is provided along with explanations of all game functions. Since this is a conversion a separate ST reference card is provided for ST specific commands. In addition, a reference card gives you valuable hints on starting the game and tells you what to do in the early stages to create a viable character before venturing out into the harder parts of the realm. A new feature allows you to set a level of difficulty and this determines how much initial equipment your character begins the game with.

This program is a nice addition to the ST lineup. The graphic are enjoyable and the play quite straight forward. Because the program takes in elements of several types of games it has to be approached a little differently in deciding if it is right for you. Parts of the game are a bit repetitive. You always are travelling the same road between villages although the scenery changes a bit. The fighting with the birds becomes tedious and serves no purpose in advancing your character. The manual says you can always flee but that never has worked for me. If you view the road sequence as one that may be used to

continued on page 31

continued from page 14

Infocom

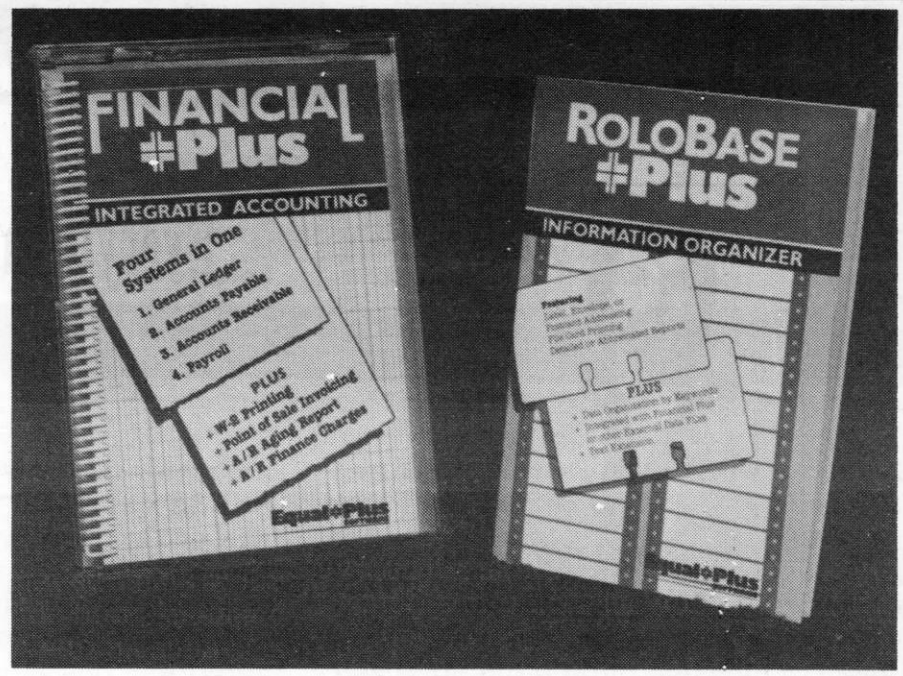
computers and computer gaming. My wife, an Infocom fan already, didn't feel that it made that much difference in her enjoyment of the game, but did say that "its nice to be a girl in one of these games since I am one". This kind of program does provide a chance for you and your wife to sit down at the computer together and play a game and maybe then she will begin to gain an understanding of the fascination all of us have with computers and computing.

PLUNDERED HEARTS is a tale of romance and adventure on the high seas. You set sail on a 17th century schooner at the request of your ailing father. Of course along the way you are captured by pirates and there the adventure begins. Patterned after the romance novel genre this tale is filled with adventure, love, danger and passion as you strive to find and save your father while dreaming of being held in the arms of Nicholas Jamison, your savior and number 1 heartthrob! This game offers several features to make game play enjoyable and a bit easier. First, as always, you may save as many game positions as you have room for on the disk. This allows you to try that risky move and if you perish reincarnation is just a mouse click away. And second, If you simply hit return at many points in the game you end up getting replys. My wife has the habit of trying to think of all the possible responses to a situation before typing anything. With PLUNDERED HEARTS in a number of locations(usually when dealing with another character for the first time) conversations or descriptions will continue by hitting a carriage return. This gets you past those areas in which a lot of thought is not required and lets you get to the more difficult problems, such as how to put out the dynamite on the ship or how to get back into the ballroom. PLUNDERED HEARTS is recommended for its' unique perspective, its' reasonable puzzles and upholds the Infocom tradition in fine style.

The second recent release from Infocom, **"NORD AND BERT COULDN'T MAKE HEAD OR TAIL OF IT"** is a horse of a different color altogether. It is billed as "eight tales of cliches, spoonerisms, and other verbal trickery" and it features 8 separate stories each featuring a different type of wordplay such as cliches, spoonerisms, puns and homonyms. Each game can be completed in one sitting, and usually takes about an hour. Once each segment is completed you are given a password and when you have finished the first 7 segments the passwords will give you access to the 8th story. Each story takes place in the mythical town of Punster and in these worlds your home can literally be on the range and if you can put your best foot forward and make your girls into pearls and tell your mobsters from lobsters you will eventually get your just desserts (deserts?).

There are 2 features of this game that set it apart from other Infocom releases. No mapping is required as you are always informed of your location in the game at the top of the screen and are told all other locations you can get to. This is also the first Infocom game with built in hints at all points of the game. Typing HINT will give you a list of relevant topics at your current location and you may pick what aspect of the game you want help on. If you can avoid the temptation to look all the time this feature is a welcome addition since the worst aspect of adventure games is to get stuck at a specific location and be unable to proceed.

Thats the Infocom wrap up for this month. Next time we will look at BEYOND ZORK which features multiple windows and automatic on-screen mapping as well as role playing character definition. For more information or game orders or to write letters requesting support for the ST computers write Infocom, 125 Cambridge Park Drive, Cambridge, MA 02140.



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FINALLY, THE SOFTWARE SOLUTION.

All in all these are two very complete, mature and extremely useful programs for those in business and, either together or separately, make a very impressive and badly needed addition to the ST software market. The documentation is extensive, with over a 250 page manual for FINANCIAL +PLUS and a 50 page manual for ROLOBASE +PLUS . . . Every aspect of the program is well covered in the manual and the company offers on-line telephone support for 90 days after purchase of FINANCIAL +PLUS to get you through your set up.—Tom Tjarnberg
ST WORLD
FEBRUARY 1988

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System Requirements
Atari® 520 ST or 1040 ST computers, 256K Ram (MS-DOS Compatible*), 512 RAM (Commodore Amiga®), or 512 RAM (Apple MacIntosh®) computers. Two drive diskette system or hard disk.
*Includes IBM-PC, XT, AT, and many others.
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MOUSE MASTER

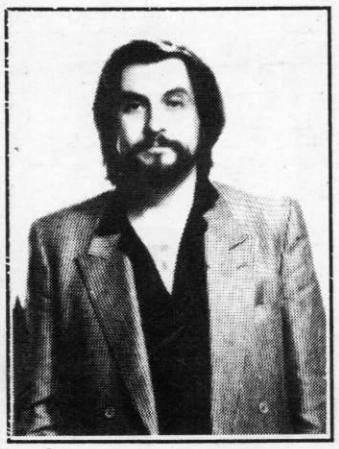
by Richie **8962**

I just got a great little switching box from a company called Practical Solutions in Tucson, AZ. They call the box **"Mouse Master"** and cost $39.95. It is to for connecting your mouse and two joysticks to your ST or Mega at the same time. On the box there is a switch and three places to connect a mouse and two joysticks and a cable that plugs into port 0 and port 1 on your computer.

After you have plugged in your mouse and joysticks to the Mouse Master and plugged it into your computer you can switch from mouse to the joystick controls by pressing the switch on the Mouse Master...Pretty Rad Huh..

Another neat thing about using the Mouse Master is that you can put the Mouse Master box somewhere that is easier for you to get to, it has a 26 inch cord on it and the color matches your computer. For people that have the 1040 STs and MEGAs they will really like it...cause it is a hassle to have to unplug the mouse cord for a joystick on these computers eveytime you want to play a game! For everyone its great cause you don't have to keep unplugging the mouse to use a joystick on your games. If I didn't get one free, I would have bought one. If you want to know more about them call Practical Solutions, 1930 E. Grant Road, Tucson, AZ 85719 (602) 884-9612 or go to your Atari store and look at them, I betcha you buy one! They don't bit!....Thanks to the guys at Practical Solutions....***Richie***

Hints & Tips



Bill Skurski

Everything you wanted to know about the Item Selector Box But were afraid to ask

by Bill Skurski

Greetings! As a Atari ST Users Group President, I am constantly being asked questions about the ST and Mega computers. Some questions repeat themselves over and over. I get hoarse reciting the answers.

This column will contain the most commonly asked questions and their answers.

I will also be chronicling hidden aspects of the user interface and hints and which occasionally may come as a discovery or revelation, even to old timers with the ST.

Even though, more than three years ago I was the first one on my block to get one of the first 520 ST's available. I am always learning about some tip or trick that up till now had eluded me.
No techno-speak.

With the novice in mind I will try to avoid obscure words or programing concepts and discuss the ST and Mega computers without resorting to techno-speak.

The following are direct excerpts from the book "HELPFUL HINTS FOR THE ATARI ST OR MEGA USER" reprinted with the permission of Bill Skurski Enterprises.

A SHORT TOUR OF THE WONDERS OF THE ITEM SELECTOR BOX

Many folks know enough about the ITEM SELECTOR box to use it daily, but many are not fully informed about how it operates and miss some neat functions it can perform.

The Origins of the Item Selector

When the creators of the Atari ST were thinking up how the ST was going to interact with people. They wanted to make the computer easy to use. It was felt that if certain things were consistent about each program written for the ST, then once you'd have learned how to do a certain thing on one program, then you would have learned it on all programs.

The ITEM SELECTOR box was one device that might be employed in many programs as a way of searching through files on the disk and selecting one of them. Some programers, however, who created applications for the ST did not follow these ideas, and therefore some programs do not use the ITEM SELECTOR box.

Fortunately, many programers did include this tool in their programs, thus following the plan to make these computers easier to learn.

There is only nine files shown on the list. How can I see the rest of them?

The Item Selector box shows a list of the files that are on the disk that is currently in the drive. To scroll up and down the list, use the vertical scroll bar on the right of the list. You can also click on the arrows to go up or down the list.

If I put a new disk in the drive, how do I get the ITEM SELECTOR to show the the files on the new disk ?

Click on the horizontal shaded bar, after you insert the new disk, the directory of the new disk will appear in place of the previous listing.

How do I redirect the ITEM SELECTOR so it will show me the files on a drive other than drive A: ?

The drive can be changed from A: to B:, or to any other existing drive, by clicking on the top text entry line, under the word "Directory:", in order to put the thin vertical line cursor on that line. Then, HIT THE ESCAPE KEY TO CLEAR THAT LINE. Now type the drive letter and a colon (as in B:), and click the shaded bar and you have changed drives.

My Item Selector is set up to show only the ".DOC" files, in the listing. How do I see files other than ".DOC" files?

Click on the line of text under the word "Directory:", in order to get the thin vertical line, which is the cursor, to move up to that line. Then BACK UP THREE SPACES with the back space key, and type an asterisk. Now, when you click in the horizontal shaded bar you will see a listing of ALL THE FILES ON YOUR DISK not just the "DOC" files.

How do I specify the FOLDER I want the directory of, while in the Item selector box?

Click on the little symbol next to the name of the folder as shown in the listing, it is a little black box with a white diamond in it. This will OPEN THE FOLDER. To CLOSE THE FOLDER click on the symbol to the left in the SHADED BAR, it looks like a black shape with a white X in it.

What is *.* ?

When an asterisk appears in a filename, this is a symbol that means "whatever". In other words "1ST_WORD.*" would mean "all the files that start with 1ST_WORD and have 'whatever' letters numbers or spaces of any combination after the period".

What is ????????.??? ?

Just as the asterisk symbolizes "whatever group of characters" the question mark substitutes for "whatever single character". For example, ????????2.TXT would specify that you want to select all the filenames that have eight characters before the period with a "2" as the last of the eight and the letters "TXT" after the period.

Beware, your computer may explode !!

When you are entering text on the line just under the word "Directory:", if you type shift/hyphen or the under-line character "_", a line of cherry bombs will march across the screen. THE COMPUTER WILL CRASH and all of your data in memory that has not been saved to the disk will be lost!

If you must specify a filename that contains an underline character "_" in this area, as in "1ST_WORD" use a "?" as a question mark can substitute for any character, as in "1ST?WORD". In this way you can work around this nasty bug.

How do you retain the search mask while in the Item Selector box? Whenever I type in a new path name the search mask always reverts to *.* when it reads the new directory.

When you enter your new search information under the word "Directory:" in the Item Selector box, you may use the arrow keys to move the thin line

continued on page 21

continued from page 6

VIDEO VEGAS

all night long if my wife would have let me. But with my luck, my ST would have probably ended up in the trunk of the car with the dog. Speaking of which, it seems I have some unfinished business to take care of in the trunk, the closet and the garage.

If you are into gambling and you need a stiff shot to take care of that "fever", try Video Vegas from Baudville software. For only $29.95, you can't lose. I think it's a good investment for the pro and beginner alike. Baudville also is doing an excellent job of supporting their customers by offering a backup disk, available for just $10.00. It would be nice if other software companies would follow Baudville's lead and do the same thing. It is just possible more software may be purchased and less pirated. As a dedicated gambler, I am extremely excited about Video Vegas and I am hyped up about being able to add still another piece of software to my ST library.

Isn't it wonderful that companies are finally realizing the power and potential of the ST computer? Goodbye and Good Luck!! *Doctor Dave*

continued from page 12

Logistik

through friday, and a starting date of March 1, 1988 for instance, and a link column of TTT, then all following columns will represent those increments as needed. Be careful to allow enough columns before setting up another worksheet section beyond TTT, as the time display lines may spill into this next section if they become large enough. Also note in this example saturdays and sundays will be excluded. You may also exclude holidays.

By using cell references to database sections, spreadsheet sections, text, formulas or other time sections, these time cells will show a horizontal line representation of a time relationship. You may further indicate some relationships to be time dependant on others, for instance one job's time line would not start until another was finished. A critical path may also be highlighted which would depict those time elements that are crucial to the project, and by juggling these segments in anticipation of a problem, an alternatively efficient time path could be established in advance.

GRAPHICS - Logistix supports many kinds of charts and graphs. At your disposal are the pie, bar, and Gantt charts (thick bars with the various data names printed inside the bar), and the area, line, spread, step and tick graphs, as well as the scattergram. Many of these can be printed or displayed either vertically or horizontally. You may include titles, footnotes, legends and free format annotations.

There are many hatching, line and thickness styles to choose from, and a large number of character fonts and sizes to use. The visual representation of numerical data is often easier to grasp than the usual ledger form, and Logistix can produce just about any graph form needed. You may also program any of the available colors, and with the free form text option you can generate workslides. Anything produced in Logistix may be of course be sent to a printer.

PRINTING - Output to a printer is easy, and Logistix supports every printer imaginable, including plotters, and laser printers. This output may be vertical or horizontal (sideways), and any portion of the worksheet or graphic can be printed. There is even a screen print command which, like the ALT HELP in GEM will output whatever is on the screen.

If you output to the disk you have a choice of formatted (with printer commands) or unformatted, the latter will allow the file to be read by most word processors and text editors. So you could output a particular section of your spreadsheet to a disk file, and bring it into a word processor or desktop publishing program for further manipulation.

In Conclusion - Logistix is a complicated program to learn for the beginner, but with the excellent documentation and sample files, it is gradually manageable. For the experienced user, Logistix will appear familiar, it will seem to grow additionally dynamic as more and more new ideas are put to it's use.

Logistix is an extremely powerful program. The spreadsheet, database, time manager, and graphics combination will take care of even the most demanding small business requirements. The /XECUTE, MACRO, AUTO, and TIME functions alone place Logistix somewhere in the forth dimension of the spreadsheet universe. I highly recommend it. GRAFOX LIMITED, 65 Banbury Road Oxford OX2 6PE, England $149.95

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continued from page 20

Hints & Tips

cursor around, deleting and adding letters until your new pathname is defined, (for example, you could change A:*.DOC to A:*.TXT). Or you can use the escape key to completely blank the entry line and type it all out again yourself. At this point click on the vertical scroll bar, and presto! The only files listed will be the ones specified! (In the example, all the ".TXT" will be listed.)

If you don't have a lot of folders you can click in the center of the directory, under the shaded bar and this will work also. But, several folders tend to get in the way and fowl up this approach, so its best to click in the vertical scroll bar for this operation.

Bill Skurski is an award winning Art Director and Designer in L.A., and has worked for major publications. "Helpful Hints for the Atari ST or Mega User", is available from Bill Skurski Enterprises, 10393 Almayo Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90064 for $16.95 including shipping.

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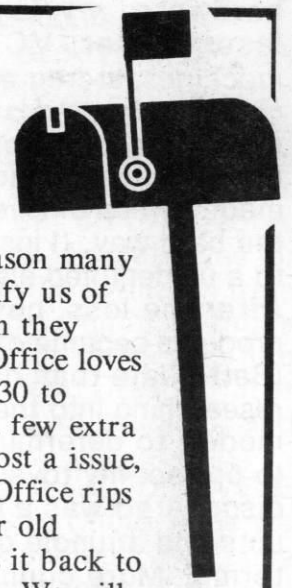

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Zap Zap Zap

by Rich Tsukiji

ZAP... No we're not playing laser tag! This is not as fun or funny, what we are talking about is your electrical power. Did you know that the quality of commercial power supplied through out our country is not the same? Commercial power is not constant? Did you believe, as most people do, that commercial power is the same everywhere? **Surprise!** Commercial power through out our country is not constant and there are wide differences in the quality delivered. Add this to the disruptions and disturbances that Mother Nature can cause and your sensitive electronic hardware, (TV's, stereos, computers, etc.), is subject to a large range of potential damage.

I have a large assortment of electronic hardware, ***my toys***...televisions, LV laser player, VCR's, robots, game machines, stereo equipment, electronic calculators and of course, computer systems and peripherals all connected to this "sleeping monster". Having been made aware of this "sleeping monster" the hard way, (I lost half of my toys due to a unidentified electrical disturbance.) After the loss, power line conditioner products became of great interest to me. (Better late than never.) I then started researching into the different brands and models to determine what I should buy to protect my toys in the future. What I discovered was a huge range of products and a jungle of new and unfamiliar terms. More confusing and disturbing was the fact that there does not exist a clear standard of how circuits for suppressors should be designed. **Even the Underwriters Laboratories (UL) have problems in testing these devices.** The lack of constant quality of power through out our country makes it impossible for a set of standards to be developed. All of the manufacturers seem to share common concepts and even components, but none are identical. Each manufacturer appears to have their own solution to the problem and with a wide range of different results. Naturally, each advertises their way as being the best, the most effective and the best priced.

So as not to make you as confused as I became with the techie terms such as nanoseconds, kHz frequencies, kilovolts, clamping and the like, I'll address the subject in plain english without the techie data.

For the most part any "claimed" surge protection device that is priced under $50.00 most likely will only curb momentary increases in voltage and filter out line noise. ***They are not capable of handling a powerful jolt of electricity and may only provide you with a false sense of security.*** I would not recommend any of these units. Keep in mind that you have a substantial investment in your system, also in those other electronic devices, (TV's, VCR's, , microwaves, etc.).

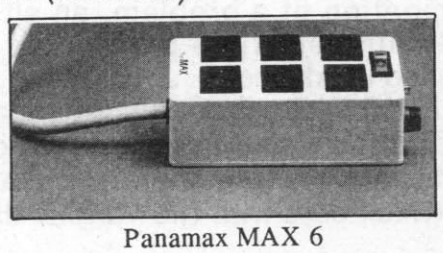
I spent weeks accumulating the specifications from over 25 different manufacturers, hours studying each one of the manufacturers specifications. Making the comparisons and contacting technical service personnel, performing a few benchmark tests on 18 brands, I came to several conclusions. The devices that appear to have the most "real" protection from the "sleeping monster" are those with a suggested retail price of between $75. and $200. You may feel that this is a lot of money to pay for an item that does not give you any real "tangible" benefit. Meaning that you can't really use it, it simply plugs between your AC outlet and your computer system (or electronic equipment). ***Buying a good quality protection device is kind of like buying car insurance, except there is only one premium payment.*** One note, whatever device you may select, select one that is fused and has a indicator lamp, that will at least tell you if it is still working.

One manufacturer's product stood out above the rest, not only in terms of the product's specifications but the quality of the component parts, workmanship, the construction of the housing, and price.... **Panamax**.

Panamax manufactures several models, two of their models that would probably cover the needs of most users are the Panamax **MAX 6** and the **MAX 4**, both are priced under $100. The MAX 6 provides 6 receptacles, 6 feet of line cord, on/off switch, circuit breaker, noise protection, fused and a indicator lamp with a suggested retail price of $99.00. The MAX 4 is identical to the MAX 6 except it has only 4 receptacles and has a suggested list price of $89.00. Care should be taken not to exceed the manufacturer's specifications. Check the ratings of all of the devices that you plug into your recepticle and make sure the total does not exceed the maximums. With a 6 recepticle plug in, hooking up two computers, two monitors and two disk drives..is bad news!

Do not learn the hard way, definately use some sort of surge protection device. The expense of learning that you need one is not worth the price! I have chosen to use Panamax's **Panamax MAX 4 and MAX 6**. For those of you that use modems, Panamax's **TeleMAX 1** is a excellent choice. The unit provides 1 recepticle, noise protection and 2 standard telephone jack recepticles. The TeleMAX 1 will provide noise filtration and surge protection to prevent damage to your telephone and modem. You should seriously consider using one of these Panamax products not only because of all of my research, the quality of the product and my recommendation, but because of Panamax's guarantee. **Panamax, a 10+ year old company, guarantees not only to replace or repair their device for life, but will also repair or replace products (your equipment) that have suffered damage from castrophic transient surges.** Now, that is what I call backing the performance of your product. Panamax products are available from your local computer dealer. Dealers that do not have a source for Panamax products may call Michael Belling at Panamax, (800) 472-5555, or in CA (800) 472-6262 for the name and telephone number of the distributor servicing their area (Panamax does not sell directly to end users). No, I do not own stock in Panamax.

Next issue we will take a look at uninterruptible power supplies (UPS) and standby power supplies (SPS). These are intended to provide backup battery power in the event of a complete power failure (blackout).



Panamax MAX 6

Video-Pro

Point of Sale System for the Rental Retailer Market

by Rich Tsukiji

8541

Hi-Tech Advisers, one of the early publishers of "Point of Sale" software for the Atari ST has released a software program for Video Rental Dealers, **"VIDEO-PRO"**. The program is designed to run from a 520ST, 1040ST or Mega system equipped with a hard disk drive, (can be used with a floppy disk drive system but not recommended), and optionally a dot matrix printer and cash drawer. Video-Pro, although designed specifically for the video rental dealer can easily be used by any business that rents and sells products.

Application software should be reviewed in an environment that it is to be used in, and if possible tested over a thirty day period or longer. Fortunately, I have a friend that has allowed me to use his video store as a testing ground using "live" data and transactions. Having this opportunity has provided actual situations highlighting the pros and cons of the program in this application. For the test, the equipment used is a 520ST upgraded to 1 meg., Atari SC1224 color monitor, Astra 20 meg hard disk drive with a built-in D/S,D/D disk drive, serial interfaced cash drawer, QMI Deskcart! and a Okidata Okimate 20 printer. The reason for the Okimate 20 rather than a faster dot matrix printer is the noise, there is relatively none with the Okimate 20 although it is slow and may not prove to be worth the benefit of reducing the noise pollution! Many publishers of P.O.S. programs have chosen to support the serial interfaced Star Micronics DP8340 dot matrix printer. The printer uses inexpensive rolls of plain paper, prints in 40 columns and fairly fast. Paul Musso of Hi-Tech Advisers said that he has chosen not to support this printer "because of its high rate of down time and poor lack of service support".

Video-Pro is a dBMAN (dBMAN is published by Versasoft) written application program, is not copy protected and easily transferred to a hard disk. For added security, there is a optional password access function and a screen blanking function to prevent screen "burn in" when not in use. The program design provides simple user functions from a menu using the mouse for function selection or single stroke keyboard commands. The opening menu screen (see figure 1) displays all the main functions, each function displays a sub-menu (see figure 2/sub-menu "Process a Rental").

Once having completed transferring all files to the hard disk and setting the various system defaults the only thing required to become operational is to enter in the inventory and customer data. Using the "Inventory Item to Add" function a sub-menu will be displayed with the fields pre-set for entering the Item I.D., Name (title number, product, etc.), rating, type/class, date added to inventory, cost, retail price. If a error is made during entry, the arrow and back space keys can be used to edit the entry. However, once the entry has been saved you will have to use the "Change/Delete Inventory" function to edit the record. Entering the customer data is basically the same, the menu function is "Open a New Membership" and displays a sub-menu with applicable field headings pre-set. The title is misleading, as the dealer does not have to have a membership program to use this application. For purposes of this review, the term "customer" will be used rather than "member".

With the inventory and customer data entered, the system is ready to process rental and sales transactions. To process a rental, the category is selected from the main menu using the mouse or first letter of the category, which will bring up the sub-menu. The clerk enters the customer I.D. number bringing up the customer data, (this will also inform the clerk if the customer has a rental out or if the customer is eligible to rent or if the customer data required is on file.), next the I.D. number of the rental is entered (this brings up the title and price), the clerk continues to enter items and when completed the system will total the rentals, prompt for amount tendered, (cash, credit card, house account), after amount tendered is entered, the screen will display the amount of change due and open the cash drawer and print a receipt. The procedure for transacting a sale is similar to the rental transaction.

One option feature that most video stores will use is the "Bonus Count". Most video dealers offer a "free movie" promotion that provides customers with a free movie rental after having rented "X" number of movies. Video-Pro has an option that can keep track of the number of rentals made by a customer and alert the clerk when a customer is entitled to a free movie after a "X" number of rentals are made by the customer, (the dealer can in the installation part of the program specify the number of rentals required for a customer to receive a bonus or free movie rental).

One important aspect of the rental business is keeping track of "high risk" customers, those with a history of bad ckecks, unreturned rentals, skippers, etc. Video-Pro allows dealers to maintain this information and alerts the clerk automatically when a bad "high risk" customer tries to rent. This feature alone could save the dealer more than enough money to pay for this system.

Monitoring the traffic of individual titles ("movers") and individual customer activity is simplified with the use of "Video-Pro". Key sales information maintained by the program and available to the dealer in printed hard copy include: Inventory report, Customer list, Rentals out now report, No activity customer report, Active customers report, Sales, Rental tracking report, Hot mover lists, Dog (slow movers) list, Class/type list. The inventory report includes the Item number, Item name, Rating, Dealer Cost, Retail price, Current rental status, To whom rented (if out) report, Date entered in system, Last date item had activity and the revenue generated. The "Hot movers" and "Dog" report provide the dealer with information on the turn of each rental item. These last two reports instantly tell the dealer which movies need to be sold off or traded. The customers (customer) Lists provides a complete rooster of the dealers customers including the last activity date, revenue generated by each customer, and total transactions by each customer, etc. The Rentals out now report will, at the user option, print a report of all current rentals out, rentals out by an individual customer. The report covers the Item number, name, rental date, due date, name of customer rented to, customer's I.D. number and whether the customer is

continued on page 24

If you have any other communications software on your ST...

Panic!

because now it's obsolete!

The other guys say they have VT-100 emulation. *Then where are their graphic characters, scrolling regions, and text effects?*

The other guys say they have a full GEM interface. *Then why must you hit the HELP key or the right mouse button before you can use the menu bar? And where are their command keys?*

The other guys make a big deal out of obsolete RLE graphics. *We have them too - and the new GIF graphics which are replacing them!*

The other guys talk about ease of use. *Then where's their on-line help?*

The other guys talk about file transfers. *Do they have XMODEM, YMODEM, "B" Protocol and a full Kermit server?*

Check these Features:

VT-100 features	vtx	vtx-132	vtx-4014	Others
Graphic Chars	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Smooth Scroll	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Region Scroll	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
132 Column Mode	No	Yes	Yes	No
Relative Cursor Address	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

Tek-4014 features	vtx-4014	Others
Text Sizes	Yes	No
Line Styles	Yes	No
Write Modes	Yes	No

Zaphodyne/vtx $39.95
Zaphodyne/vtx-132 $49.95
Zaphodyne/vtx-4014 $59.95

Additional Features: Capture Buffer, Text Editor, On-Line Help, 65 page manual.

vtx-132 and vtx-4014 require 1 MByte (1040 ST or Mega ST).

Call 1 - 800 - 527 - 4759 (MC/Visa/COD)
add $3.00 Postage & Handling, allow 3 - 4 weeks for delivery

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VT-100 is a trademark of Digital Equipment Company, Inc.
Atari, 520ST, 1040ST and Mega ST are trademarks of the Atari Corporation.
Tektronix, Tek and 4014 are trademarks of the Tektronix Corporation.
Kermit is a trademark of Columbia University.

Expect the best from Zaphodyne Inc. P.O. box 1111, Fairborn OH 45324

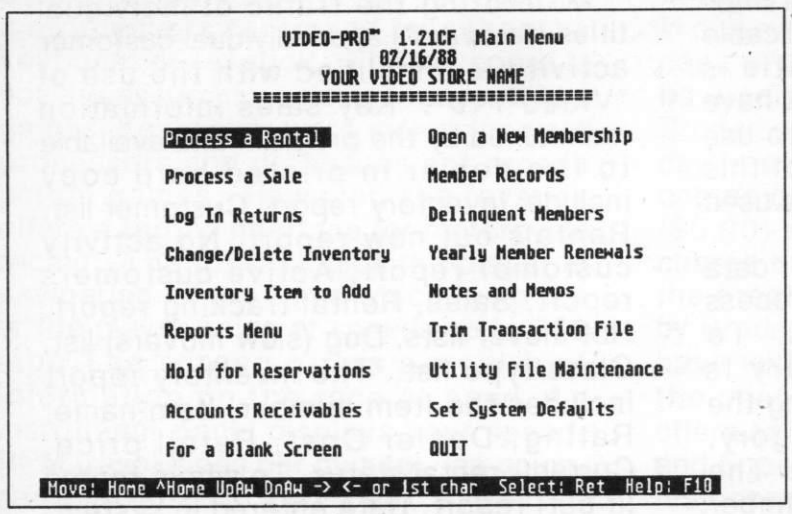

figure 1 Main Menu

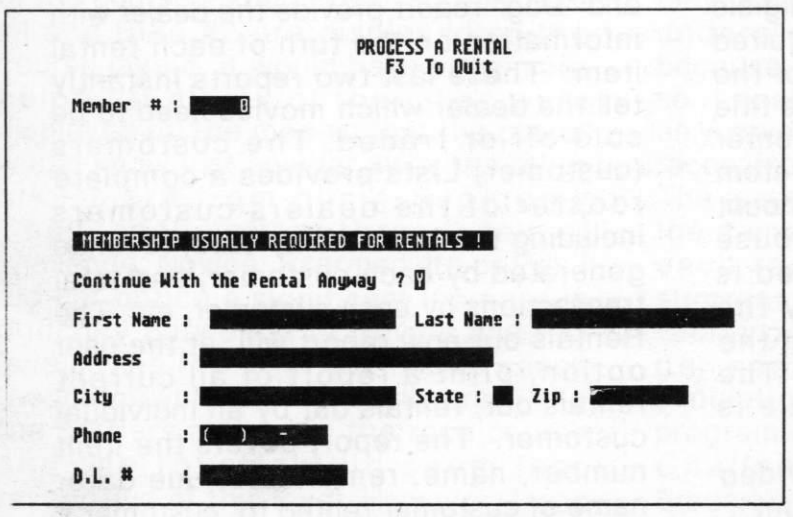

figure 2 Sub/Menu Process a Rental

continued from page 23

Video-Pro

marked as "bad".

The sales report provides the user with options of printing a report contain- ing rental records only, sales records only, late charges only of all the records. Each contains the invoice number, in- voice date, number of items on invoice, indentifies whether the transaction was a rental or sale, subtotal, the tax amount, the total, customer I.D., and customer name. A added feature is the ability of the program to generate labels for all of the inventory items, a selected range of inventory items or for a single item. (The label is suitable for use on the product.) Mailing labels can also be created from the dealers customer list by category or a single label for a specific individual.

After field testing the program with over 2,000 rental items and 1,000 customers, ***there were only four functions that were found missing*** which are used extensively by not only the field tested dealer but by most franchise and independent video stores. First, in the "Bonus count" option, the dealer setting up the customer base can not credit the customer to date with rentals except by entering bogus rental transactions and return rental transactions equaling the number of rental credits due that customer. The ability for a dealer to edit the rentals to be credited to a customer would be extremely helpful. Second, in the "Bonus count" option, all rentals are credited towards the "Bonus count". The majority of video rental dealers rent not only movies, but video players, recorders, camcorders, etc., these are included in the "Bonus count". The dealer should have a way to identify items which are not movie rentals or items which are not to count towards the "Bonus count". Third, the default rental price is fixed for all rentals, although this field may be edited at the time of the transaction, it is an area that opens the dealer to errors which may not only be financially costly, but can easily create customer relation problems. Most video dealers have at least two rental prices for movies. One for current titles and another for older titles or special categories. Clerks using Video-Pro must always double check the title number or title when entering a rental transaction to be sure the rental price charged is correct, (The default rate is usually set for the highest rental charge and customers could easily be over-charged.). The lack of such a capability will require that a dealer having such a price policy will have to maintain a hard copy pricing guide for clerks to follow. The program should allow for at least two default price charges based on the product product I.D. number. For instance, titles under #XXXX, one default rate and titles over #XXXX another default rate. The last item is the fixed form length of the paper. A dealer must buy the program with the form length pre-set to either half-sheet or full length. (Computer dealers certainly will not like having to tie up additional money stocking two versions of this program.) The user should have the ability to re-set the form length through a utility option whenever they chose.

Video-Pro is a very comprehensive "Point of Sale" (P.O.S.) *program directed at the rental market for use on a Atari ST or Mega system.* Video-Pro is easy to install and less complicated to use than most departmentalized cash registers providing the dealer with half the report features. Training of store personnel for daily transactions requires, in most cases, less than 30 minutes of instruction. Video-Pro with a suggested retail price of $199.00 is without question an exceptional buy! If and when Hi-Tech Advisers decides to incorporate the above changes in this program, *"Video-Pro" running on an Atari system will be without question the "FINEST" price/performance "Point of Sale" system available designed specifically for the rental dealer market.* Additional information can be obtained from your local Atari dealer or direct from Hi-Tech Advisers.

"Find Your Number" Contest

Somewhere in ST WORLD is 5 numbers...find yours and win! Call (503) 673-2259 as soon as you have found your number to claim your prize! This month's prizes are Michtron's "Juggler", Alpha System "Power Print ST", Beery's Bit "Orion's Run", Buzzword Game "Buzzword" and Progressive Peripheral's "Microlawyer". First call, first pick. Did you miss your number last month? See Showcase section.

PREVIEWS

PREVIEWS is a caption of new products for the ST. Not a review or evaluation of the product or a recommendation of it's value or usefulness.

BECKEMEYER DEVELOPMENT TOOLS
478 Santa Clara Avenue
Oakland, CA 94610

HARD DISK SENTRY ($49.95)

Hard Disk Sentry is really two programs in one. First, it is a hard disk repair utility; Second, a optimizer. Every time your system bombs, reports a fatal error, simply hands and needs to be reset, or totally crashes, undeniably some data has been damaged. If your hard disk is already in an unstable condition, data can be damaged even during normal operation, such as running a program or writing to a file. Technically speaking, during the diagnostic process, the Hard Disk Sentry performs many tests, such as checking if files are cross-linked or have invalid links. The program prints out comprehensive statistics. The program reports which files are threatened, and verifies if the sub-directories are linked properly. The HDS checks to see if the file size is consistent with the number of clusters used and makes sure that no used clusters are without files. During the repair process, the HDS proceeds to fix as many of the errors as possible. Then, a summary list of disks which have (or had) errors will be printed with a complete log of interesting statistics.

MICHTRON
576 South Telegraph
Pontiac, MI 48053
(313) 334-5700

PRESCHOOL KIDPROGS ($39.95)

A set of three creative programs, KIDGRID+, KIDBLOCKS and KIDKEYS, designed to stimulate the development of young children. The programs feature activities that will capture the interest of young children. **Kidgrid+** is a drawing program with 192 triangles that the child can fill with one of 12 colors. The artistic and graphic abilities now can be developed without the mess of paints and crayons! **Kidblocks** is an on-screen, multi-sided block puzzle for the child to unscramble. Their visualization and problem-solving abilities will be challenged and encouraged with the rewards of music and special effects when they triumphantly complete the different puzzles. **Kidkeys** allows the child to pick-a-tune from 20 songs or play music by themselves on the three octave keyboard with either a piano or organ sound. This produces a familiarity with fundamentals of music at an early age, and the included lyrics allow them to sign along with favorite songs that will be remembered for a lifetime.

PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS
1930 East Grant Road
Tucson, AZ 85719
(602) 884-9612

VIDEOKEY ($119.95)

An RGB to composite converter, compatible with Monitor Master, designed specifically for the ST's without RF modulators. Now you can videotape your graphics creations or simply hook up a composite monitor and have a high quality output with good color representation (provides a much better output than RF-equipped ST's!).

VERSASOFT CORPORATION
4340 Almaden Expressway, Suite 250
San Jose, CA 95118
(408) 723-9044

dBMAN version 4.0 (Interpreter $249.95/Runtime $249.95 This version emphasizes a new level of dBase compatibility. Most dBASE III+ applications will run without modification. Highlights of V4.0 include: Now reads and writes dBASE III+ data files; BROWSE, this allows full screen-multiple record editing; Memo Field, free form variable length text field; Command Abbreviations, four-letter short-cuts, speed interactive mode (not available in runtime); SET FORMAT TO, thisdBase command allows you to create a custom data entry screen for the EDIT and APPEND commands; Many new dBase commands and finctions - PUBLIC, PRIVATE, PARAMETERS, ALIAS, RANGE, CDOW(), CMONTH(), STUFF(), FOUND(), and many more. Over 60 new commands and syntax enhancements; Time arithmetic, LIKE - wild card pattern matching operator, save/restore screen images, and more; FASTER - user definable cache buffering for programs and data - less disk I/O; New manual - a 400+ page manual is included with each interpreter update. Update policies: Send original diskettes and check, MO, or Visa/MC number and expiration date to VersaSoft - update. Update prices: From V2.x to 4.0 Interpreter US$80./Runtime US$70.00 - From V3.x to 4.0 Interpreter US$45./Runtime US$40. Through April 1, 1988 update 3.0 users that have updated after September 1, 1987 may obtain V4.0 for US$30.05 with a copy of VersaSoft invoice.

TRIO ENGINEERING
P.O. Box 332
Swampscott, MA 01907
(617) 964-1673

DIGISPEC ($39.95)

Digispec is a software package that works on the 520, 1040 and Mega ST with color monitor and ComputerEyes digitizer. Digispec displays the captured image on the 512-color screen, lets you adjust it for proper color balance, brightness and contrast, and then save it on disk in Spectrum-512 picture file format. On top of 512 pure colors it offers extensive dithering capabilities, bringing the number of simulated color shades to about 24,000. You can also access a huge library of color images create on computers other than ST. You don't need ComputerEyes to use Digispec for this purpose. It is compatible with the two most popular graphic formats: Amiga's IFF and Compuserve's GIF. You can view and convert to Spectrum-512 format ANY picture created on Amiga (including the 4096-color system Hold-and-Modify mode pictures). 512-color images created with Digispec can ve viewed later with the sophiscated Spectrum-512 slideshow program provided on Digispec disk. It can display single picture, animated sequences and even stereo picrtures with Sterotek 3-D glasses from LC Technologies.

continued from page 25

PREVIEWS

ICD, Inc.
1220 Rock Street
Rockford, IL 61101
(815) 968-2228

OPTIMIZED SYSTEMS SOFTWARE (OSS)

Effective immediately, ICD will manufacture, market and support all current OSS software titles for Atari computers. Products currently available: MAC/65, MAC/65 Tool Kit, ACTION!, ACTION! Tool Kit, BASIC XL, BASIC XL Tool Kit, BASIC XE, Writer's Tool, DOS XL, and Personal PASCAL for the Atari ST. Orders and support (815) 968-2228. The San Jose numbers for OSS will no longer be providing support.

HI-TECH ADVISERS
P.O. Box 7524
Winter Haven, FL 33883-7524
(813) 294-1885

SUPER SALES-PRO

A full featured Point-of-Sale/Inventory Control Software System for the Atari ST. SSP will accomodate medium to larger sized wholesale, retail or mail order businesses. This system will include all of the necessary functions for more complicated and demanding business applications.

OFFICE-PRO ($199.00)

This package will provide full featured time scheduling integrated with billing for up to 999 staff members. Also supported will be mail-merge and several other office functions.

ELECTRONIC ARTS
1820 Gateway Drive
San Mateo, CA 94404
(415) 571-7171

GONE FISH'N ($44.95)

Bass fishing simulation! There are 20 good bass fishing weeks in a year, and as Gone Fish'n fisherman, you must determine which days you can fish and those which you must work. Paying attention to the weekly forecast will help you determine much of that information as it contains weather conditions, temperature trends and Uncle Jake's fishing forecast for the season. There are 8 lakes to fish, different lures to select, fancy electronic gear to buy, and correct casting, retriving, rod and reel action requirements for successful fishing. Gone Fish'n is by Interstel Software.

NITELIGHT
P.O. Box R
Billerica, MA 01821
(617) 663-4463

MULTI-USER BBS

Nitelite has announced a mutil-user BBS system for ST users. The BBS can be used with multi-lines through their SP408 ($199.00) board for up to 3 incoming lines and the SP808 ($349.00) for up to 7 incoming lines. 4 port cable set ($38.00) and 8 port cable set ($78.00). This is the first operating multi-user TOS BBS with GEM background file transfer currently running on a ST. BBS software is $99.00 will support 300/1200 and 2400 bauds.

BULLETIN BOARD

Information posted received directly from manufacturer or publisher. Contact them them directly for any other additional information.

HI-TECH ADVISERS
P.O. BOX 7524
WINTER HAVEN, FL 33883-7524
(813) 294-1885

TRADE-IN OFFER

For a limited time Hi-Tech will accept any Comparable Commercial Software Package as partial payment of up to 50% of the price of the software from Hi-Tech. Offer applies to all Business Software. For additional information, contact Hi-Tech or your local dealer.

FTL GAMES
P.O. Box 112489
San Diego, CA 92111

OIDS CONTEST

FTL has announced a OIDS galaxy design contest for purchasers of the game. Each month FTL will award a cash prize of $100.00 for the best original OIDS galaxy submitted. Each entering contestant will also receive a disk containing all the winning entries. The contest runs through March 31, 1989. Entry requirements are contained in the FTL OIDS manual.

WORDPERFECT CORPORATION
288 West Center Street
Orem, UT 84057
(801) 225-5000

WORDPERFECT 4.1 UPGRADE

The latest update to WordPerfect 4.1 for the Atari ST is dated January 29, 1988. Registered owners may contact them for ulatest revisions.

TRUE BASIC, INC.
39 South Main Street
Hanover, NH 03755
(603) 643-3882

TRUE BASIC ($79.95)

Price correction for True Basic as reported in review ST World/January '88 is $79.95 not $99.95 as reported.

ELECTRONIC ARTS
1820 Gateway Drive
San Mateo, CA 94404
(800) 245-4525 in CA (800) 562-1112

"SOFTWARE FOR LIFE" PROGRAM

This new software exchange program will allow consumers who upgrade from an 8-bit Atari to a 16 bit ST to upgrade their software as well. If a consumer owns an EA title on a Atari 8-bit, the new program allows them to purchase the same title for a ST at HALF price! The program also applies to the following affliated labels: Alturas, Arcadia, Datasoft, Design Software, Inc., First Byte, Game Designer's Workshop, Interstel Corporation, Leisure Genius, Paragon Software Corp., Quantum Computer Services, Strategic Studies Group and the Software Toolworks.

classified information

ST WORLD is published monthly and all advertising for the classified section must be received by the 18th of the month preceeding the publishing date. Example: Cover date / October issue is published August 18, shipped to vendors and subscribers during the last week of August. The publication will appear in stores depending on geographical location to the west coast during the month of September.
No logos, or photos or any other illustrations can be used in the classified ad section.

INSTRUCTIONS

In order for us to keep the ad rates low and insure accuracy, it is necessary that the following guidelines are followed.
1. Type or print your ad copy legibly on a plain sheet of paper. Ads received that are difficult to read will be returned.
2. Clearly indicate special point sizes and type to be set in bold or centered.
3. If more than one ad is submitted, use a separate sheet of paper for each ad. Make sure your name, address and phone number is included at the bottom of the page.

AD COPY CHANGES - Due to our low rates, you can not change, modify, cancel, or receive a refund for an ad once it has been typeset. Ads are typeset within 5 days after receipt.

RATES

$0.15 per word, $5.00 per ad minimum. Boldface type additional $0.05 per word. All copy set in 7 point helvetica type font. See below examples for additional typefonts and sizes.

REPEAT ADS

Ads running more than one time. A repeat ad will be coded at the end of the ad with the starting and ending volume number and issue number. Example: VIINO6VIINO8. Ad started with Volume number II, issue number 6 and will end with volume number II, issue number 8.

PROOFS

Due to the low cost of the classified ad rates a free checking copy or tear sheet can not be sent. If proof of insertation is desired add $0.50 to cover postage or $1.00 for complete issue.

PHOTOS

NO PHOTOS OR LINE ART ALLOWED IN CLASSIFIED ADS.

ST WORLD ABBREVIATIONS

AP = Add postage
SASE = Send self addressed stamped envelope.
FC = Shipped freight collect.
MBG = Money back guarantee.
PP = Postage paid.
XXRP = Number of days return priviledge.
CCP = Check clearance required.
M.O. = Money order.
PC = Personal check
CC = Company check
MCV = Master card or Visa accepted.
UPSC = Shipped UPS collect.
UPS = Shipped prepaid UPS
USPS = Shipped by U.S. Mail.

EXAMPLES

HELVETICA
7 point - Standard
7 point bold - Addl $0.05 word
7 point wide - Addl $0.10 word.
7 point wide bold - Addl $0.15 word
10 point - Addl $0.10 word
10 point bold - Addl $0.20 word
10 point wide - addl $0.30 word
10 point wide bold - addl $0.45 word

Name, address, city, state, zip code and phone number in bold 7 point helvetica - flate rate $2.00

PAID ST WORLD SUBSCRIBERS 25% DISCOUNT OFF TOTAL

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Copyright laws pertaining to software can be enforced. Due to the complexity of determining what software is legal or illegal, any and all liability for copyright violations shall rest solely upon the advertiser. ST WORLD and its staff do not in any way condone or knowingly participate in any such illegal activity.

CLASSIFIED ORDER FORM

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To figure cost of ad, the rate is fifteen cents per word. Minimum charge $5.00
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NUMBER OF 7 PT WIDE BOLD WORDS _____	X 15 CENTS =	_____
NUMBER OF 10 PT WORDS _____	X 10 CENTS =	_____
NUMBER OF 10 PT BOLD WORDS _____	X 20 CENTS =	_____
NUMBER OF 10 POINT WIDE WORDS _____	X 30 CENTS =	_____
NUMBER OF 10 PT WIDE BOLD WORDS _____	X 45 CENTS =	_____
NAME, ADDRESS, CITY, STATE, ZIP & PHONE	$2.00	$ 2.00
NUMBER OF ISSUES _____	TOTAL	_____
TOTAL REMITTANCE _____	SUBSCRIBERS LESS 25%	_____

ADS USING P.O. BOX ONLY MUST INCLUDE STREET ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE NUMBER ON YOUR CHECK FOR OUR RECORDS ONLY.

CLASSIFIED

FREE P/D DISK

Your choice with first order send SASE for information. Also available computers, printers, modems, disks, software and more. Call our BBS - ST.U.N. - 24hrs. - 3/12/2400 - 30 megs. **DGL FREEWARE, 1019 NASH ROAD, NORTH TONAWANDA, NY 14120, BBS (716) 649-0057** MARCH/88

DISK LABELS 3 1/2

Continous form pin feed labels for 3 1/2 disks. $6.00 for 200. Includes continental USA shipping. Send check or M.O. Charles Walker, 1454 Gossett Ct., Lithonia, GA 30058 MARCH/88

ST NEWS

Tired of trying to keep up with the latest and best in Public Domain software? Now you can get the best automatically every month for the next year. Two (2) disks a month for twelve (12) months - and every month you will find interesting news about the ST and get the very latest programs in the public domain. Join many satisfied subscribers and stay up to date with the best software. Only $49.95 for a twelve month (24 disks) subscription - hardly more than the cost of blank disks. Or send $5.95 for sample copy. Annual subscriptions ONLY may be ordered by calling our toll free number - 800 - 862- 2345 - wait for dial tone - then dial "PAT". **PATNOR ENTERPRISES, P.O. BOX 370782, EL PASO, TX 79937.** VOLIINO9APRIL/88

GBUG

GFA BASIC USERS GROUP. MONTHLY NEWSLETTER WITH PROGRAMMING TIPS. NATIONWIDE MEMBERSHIP. DETAILS LARGE SASE FULL MBG!! **RASCOM, 22128 NEWKIRK AVENUE, CARSON, CA 90745.** VIINO9APRIL\88

SOFTWARE/ BLANK DISKS

Get the best in public domain software - over 100 disks full - complete catalog on disk for $2.00. Many special offers included. Buy the best blank 3.5" diskettes - SONY makes them and we sell them - ONLY $12.50 per box of 10 with labels and polyethylene sleeves - minimum order is 2 boxes - add $1.00 shipping for each 2 boxes ordered. **PATNOR Enterprises, P.O. Box 370782, El Paso, TX 79937.** VOL IINO0APRIL/88

FOR SALE

Used ST software. Send for free listing. Many titles to chose from. Must sell below discounted prices. Hurry while supplies last. First come - first serve. **Jeff Howell, 415 Beach Avenue, Half Moon Bay, CA 94019 (415) 726-9797** JAN/88MARCH/88

Pin Feed 3 1/2 Disk Labels For Your Printer

100 $4.00/500 $15.00 **Introductory offer:** Buy one package of 100 labels for $4.00 and receive a **FREE Public Domain Disk** containing a Disk Labeling Program, a disk copy program and several others, add $1.00 S/H. **Over 300 other Public Domain Disks** available $4.00 each. **Brad Roltgen Enterprises, 719 E. Minarets, Fresno, CA 93710, (209) 432-2159** JAN/88MARCH/88

ATTENTION ATARI DEALERS

Send us your dealer name and address on your letterhead or enclose a business card. We will send you dealer information about a new line of software now available for the ATARI 8 bit and ST. Complete dealer information is waiting for you. **RONDEL PRODUCTS, P.O. BOX 151, BURTONSVILLE, MD 20866** JAN/88MARCH88

FRUGALWARE

10 DISK SET: Over 3 Megabytes of programs including accessories, Pac-Man, Database, Wordprocessor, Animator, digital Sound System, C Compiler, CP/M Emulator, BBS....more. Only $25.00 Postpaid. **FRUGALWARE, 23 EAST GREEN ST., WEST HAZLETON, PA 18201 (717) 455-6876** JAN/88MARCH/88

SPEED READ!

Learn to read 1,000 words per minute or more. Use included readings or any text file. Color or monochrome ST. $9.98 **B.Wilson, 6812 Willamette, Austin, TX 78723** March '88

LABELS

Box of 5,000 tractor feed address labels. 3 1/2" X 15/16" 1 up
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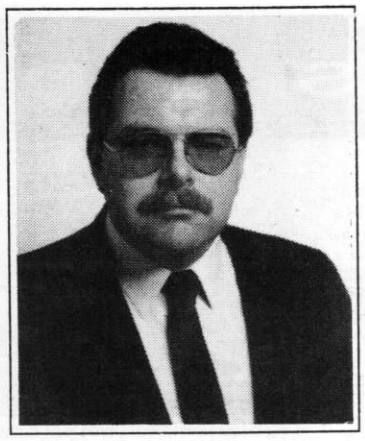

All Things Considered

by Charlie Young

The Ultimate Test

Quick! Without pausing, look in your shirt pocket! Are there a bunch of PENS or other items there? Gotcha! Now, look around your home. Is there a trade publication stack anywhere? Gotcha! Next, do you write an occasional program every day for hours on end, or has your ST been apart more than it has been together? Gotcha!

As I am writing this, I scan the room and observe the trappings of techiedom. From left to right on the shelf behind my monitor are:

A Playboy Mug stuffed with pencils, pens, an old slide rule, my pipe, and ajeweler's screwdriver (to fix my metal rimmed glasses); a Motorola portable cellular phone with rapid charger; a Mardi Gras plastic cup with MORE pens and screw drivers; a pager with a dead battery; a spare battery for the cellular radio; a potted plant minus the plant; a "Tekna-Lite" flashlight that I use on camping trips; my printer (out of paper); my name tag from SPRING Comdex; a 1984 World's Fair Mug filled with stale cigars; new batteries for the pager (bought them a month ago); several diskette holders overflowing with their contents; and the phone jack with two "tees" to accommodate an extra modem here or there.

On the computer desk are numerous magazines including Unix World, back issues of **ST World**, Byte, and Compuserve's ONLINE Today. Computer Shopper is peeking out at me from beneath a W-4 form, Mark Williams' newest compiler, and an old airline ticket. If this were an A.A. meeting, I'd have to stand up, dust the wrinkles out of my trousers and say in a loud wavering voice, ***"I am a Techie!"***. The sign on the wall to the right of my desk reads, "When in charge, ponder; When in trouble, delegate; When in doubt, mumble." You can be sure that there is no "doubt" to mumble about here!

Why Read **ST World***?*

The ST industry is changing rapidly. Atari has begun to release theMega ST, and on it's heels is the new 80386 PC's. Also soon to be released is the "Abaq", an Inmos Transputer based workstation. All this on top of Atari's announcement that IDRIS would be THE multi-user operating system for the new Mega ST. These are significant developments for business users and technical professionals as well, and **ST World** has the staff and ability to bring these developments to you in the manner in which you have become accustomed .....**FIRST!**

No computer operating system, language, or magazine is **ANYTHING** without a user base. We want to be the focal point of the user group activity for these new products beginning with IDRIS and will organize the support necessary to offer this service to our readers. We are already at work *"behind the scenes"* to suggest where we can, ways to offer this technology to our readership at the BEST price, and developments to you in print **FAST**.

Have you seen coverage of the **"Abaq"** and **IDRIS** in any other publication **IN DEPTH** as you have here? The reporting of Atari new technology requires background and knowledge of these new fields and at ST World, we strive to use the most qualified journalists in the reporting of these issues.

The **ST World** format has proven effective in allowing us to "*hold the presses"* when necessary to get you the news fast and **FIRST**. That will continue here, as **TIMELY** reporting is our major goal. We urge you to read other publications, but also spread the word about **ST World**. If you get your computer news anywhere else, it will be **OLD NEWS** by the time you see it.

Ultimate Systems

By now the word is out. Atari is pushing for a 68030 Unix based computer this year. Fueled by favorable press reception to IDRIS on the ST and Mega ST in publications like Unix World, the hardware machine at Atari has its elves working overtime. The rumor mill has it that the new computer will be an ST add-on as the first Transputers have been. Using the ST and Mega ST as front ends to these machines is wise for upward compatibility purposes. Imagine the systems you could configure with the new *"black boxes"* from Atari!

First you start with a 520ST or 1040ST, upgrading to dual drives or a harddrive. Of course TOS has abundant applications to facilitate the running of your small business. Several ST's with WordPerfect in a law firm, a cash register ST in a video store, or a drafting package are but a few examples. Business expands so you add a MEGA ST for desktop publishing or tie all of your single machinesinto the MEGA with IDRIS or MTC Shell to share a large database. Of course you could have a 520ST running IDRIS and four dumb terminals using the "VE" editor or Tigera's "WORD ERA."

Business doubles so you add on a *"black box"* for Unix to increase the number of terminals, or a Transputer for large scale operations in drafting or graphics. If you already have IBM PC gear, you could add one of Atari's new 80386 machines running under SCO Xenix with VPix, which would allow you to run MS-DOS applications concurrently with Xenix. When it came time to add terminals, you could use a 520ST, a MEGA ST, or even the Abaq as a workstation tied into the Xenix 80386 machine.

The Formula

The obvious word here is **"connectability"**, to be considered **THE buzz word** of the early 1990's. Everything should connect to everything else. The only thing missing from the ST scenario is more good quality software available for other Unix based computers, ported to the ST. Beyond the *GEE-GAW* of new technology, Atari must fashion a trusting relationship with software houses if it expects to sell SYSTEMS and it must begin NOW!

In a recent interview with one of the most popular business magazines, Apple Computer bigwig John Scully outlined how he engineered the comeback of Apple after his firing of Steven Jobs, one of Apple's founders. He knew that the business market was vastly different than the home computer market, and that different strategies were needed. Scully's formula was to open up the Apple architecture, strongly support the software vendors, and **ADVERTIZE**.

As I touched upon last month, Atari has the horsepower and open architecture for "connectability". What will be needed is an examination of the successes and failures of other companies to chart out a marketing strategy that will best serve its targeted market. Failure to learn from history is inexcusable for any company.

We all should have the confidence that Atari will do the right thing, and lend our full support to their efforts. With the money Atari has invested in hardware research and production alone, common sense dictates that they would do what is necessary to follow through and protect their investment. ***The loyal Atari users of this country wait with anticipation for the next great era of Atari.***

MIDITRACK ST • UPDATE

by Tom Tjarnberg

Walt Disney once said that Disneyland will never be complete as it will always be changing and growing to provide new thrills and excitement to present and future generations. The Hybrid Arts world of MIDI products seems to be following in Walts' footsteps. Founded in 1983 just as MIDI was becoming known the company has been at the forefront of computer aided music creation and recording for some time and their world of music products just keeps on growing. In addition they continue to modify and change their current products adding new features and options and offer a reasonable upgrade path to current owners. They hold a special place in my heart simply because while **ATARI** of old was going down the drain in 1984 they continued to support the ATARI computers with an excellent sequencer, **MIDITRACK**, and have continued to provide new and exciting products for the ST line of computers. Last year I reviewed **GENPATCH**, a generic patch librarian, and did an overview of an earlier version of **MIDITRACK ST**. Now a new version has been released so its time to take a look at some of the exciting new features. But first, a word about Hybrid Arts. These guys really are perfectionists and sometimes it seems like updates take forever to arrive. They even ran ads last summer in music magazines printing dates and times for new product releases. Of course the products came out a bit later that the printed dates. But they never have let me down yet and when updates do arrive they have always worked as promised. They also offer free or reasonably priced updates to their software and some of the upgrades, such as new .CNF files for **GENPATCH** as well as other demos are available on their B.B.S. or from them simply by sending in a blank disk with your request. In addition they offer phone support Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 12-4pm Pacific time. I think that 1988 will be a banner year for them as they are planning to introduce a number of new products including **HybriSwitch** (10 MIDI programs in memory at once!), **EZTRACK PLUS** with new editing features, and **EZSCORE PLUS** (just released last week), a fantastic new music scoring program I will be reviewing next month. When you add in current products such as the **ADAP** sampler and **MIDIPLEXER** 64 channel MIDI box you are looking at one of the most exciting MIDI lineups available for the ST.

MIDITRACK ST is a 60 track sequencer with virtually all of the features needed for the most taxing of MIDI needs. You get real time recording, step recording, editing with intelligent punch in/punch out, quantize down to single tick level, transpose, relative volume change, patch change and more. You also get hardware box which provides tape sync and SMPTE sync (SMPTETRACK ST only) for precise timing of your recordings. This software offers a claimed increase in speed of 15 to 20 percent over the speed of the ST operating system. The regular operating system is replaced by one that does seem to run faster, at least when changing windows and screens. Shifts between screens is nearly instantaneous. The timing accuracy of the programs is supposed to be very good and the new operating system surely contributes to this. Resolution of the recording is reported to be at the bit level., and will be very precise for all applications.

Another feature is that MIDITRACK ST offers 27 registers to store setups of tempo, start/stop times, auto-locate points and mute status of tracks(which tracks are on or off). this feature really comes in handy during editing when you want to store different combinations of tracks for comparison on playback but don't want to write all the information down. In conjunction with the register function is another which allows you to define sections of your piece and then hook them together to form a longer piece without using up all your memory. You can have up to 99 sections and they can be chained up to 400 sections in a row with up to 14 tracks per section. Should be enough for most of us, I would think. This allows for easy creation of loops of repeating parts without having to input all the music. A new feature offered in the update allows you "flatten chain". All the program data on the chain track is combined on one track and you end up with one linear track with all your chain information.

This is a welcome addition that really allows you to finish up your song and although it uses up some of your song memory will clean up your song files quite nicely. You are also now give the option to create an endless chain that will repeat until the sequencer is stopped or paused. This feature is great for creating simple repeating patterns with very little effort turns your ST into the most patient practicing partner you can find. Just play along with that endless 12 bar pattern until you get your soloing abilities down, or drive your neighbors crazy with the eternal 4 measure repeating drum solo, the choice is yours!

There are more new features added to the Edit menu. Quantize may now be set to "Humanize". This varies your choice of quantize randomly by plus and/or minus a previously specified number of ticks. This results in performances that sound a bit more like they were performed by humans rather than machines. You are now also give the option of unmixing your mixed tracks by a key zone and can then select a note range to unmix as well as whether you want all non-note events copied along with the note events within the selected zone. I'm not that familiar with the need for this function but others I know really value this kind of feature. While editing you may now also choose Whole versus Region when editing quantize, durate, velocity adjust, transpose and humanize. Had enough new stuff yet? Well there's more! You now have fast forward and rewind to quickly get to any point in your composition quickly and easily. Hate the lack of measure markers in the earlier release? No problem now, just select Meter Mode , set the time signature and the display is changed to reflect measures instead of beats. In addition you can set a 1 or 2 measure lead in to count off before you start playing although the program records during this lead-in time. You may include meter changes within your song by building a meter track in the same way you build a tempo track. And finally for those of you who know what film clicks are you are provided with a film clicks display to show your timing, and the overall tempo resolution has been

continued on page 31

continued from page 3

The NAMM SHOW

"Multi-Program Environment", (soon to be standard within KCS), which will allow up to 4 DR. T programs in memory at once (on a 1040) - that would be real useful with the COPYIST, KCS, and a DR. T Visual Sound Editor or two!

DRUMWARE showed their *"GENWAVE"* Editor for the EMAX and SP-1200, which joins their popular editors for the AKAI S-900, S-700/X-7000, S612, and PROPHET 2000/2. You'd want to use these with at least a Meg to get more than 3 seconds of sample time! These are easy to use necessities for editing any of the abovementioned samplers.

MU-SCRIPT, **QUIT LION**'s scoring/sequencer program, has some new features in Version II, including external MIDI Sync, 8 staves, an improved user interface, and lots more, so check it out.

MIDIMOUSE MUSIC showed their line of patch editor/librarians which were discussed in the previous ST WORLD issue - they, as well as their new sequencer, "FAST TRACKS" are reasonably priced and really useful programs. I should mention too that **DIGIDESIGN**, a well known MAC software company, is now importing C-LAB's *"CREATOR"* program, one of the most popular Atari sequencers in Europe.

Last, but certainly not least, the **SONUS** booth held lots of surprises. First, they have a really nice-looking scoring program out in a couple of weeks called *"SUPERSCORE"* which not only does 32 polyphonic staves, all the clefs and symbols you'd want to use (including guitar and chord symbols) and complete editing features, but it even has a built-in 32 track sequencer, too! Their *"LIVE PERFORMANCE"* program is a great idea - it's for use with *MASTERPIECE* (soon to be Ver. 2.0!) and SST Sequencers, and it loads up to 16 songs in memory for live use. Look for this one soon. Finally, they showed D-50 and Mirage visual editors with easy pull-down menus and full waveform editing.

So, there you have it. I couldn't mention everything I saw (space restrictions, you know!), but there was plenty at the show to be excited about. Hybrid's Laser show and Adam Rado's *"Humanoids on Parade"* at the Sonus booth showed us some creative applications for the new technology. Now, let's go out there and have some fun with it!.....*LAURIE Z - MIDI CITY*

Adam Rado's "Humanoids on Parade"

Bob Moore / Hybrid Arts showing "ADAP II"

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Geoff Ryle showing new Steinberg "Pro 24 III"

continued from page 29

MIDITRACK ST • UPDATE

improved with 4 times as many tempos to choose from in the range of 45 to 240 beats per minute.

I've saved the best new feature for last: **GRAPHIC EDITING!** Once you have recorded a track you now have a fantastic graphic editing screen at your disposal to make exact changes in your performance. Hopefully the picture of the screen will be printed with this review but on the graphic editing screen there are 4 areas. The lower left hand corner of the screen provides a visual piano-roll like display which shows all the events taking place on a preselected track. If the track contains more than one MIDI channel you may view any one of them as well as all channels. Clicking on any one of the lines representing a note brings up a display in the upper right hand corner on which you may change the note or attack velocity with a mouse click. Note length is displayed here and may be changed with just a click of the mouse. On the main edit screen you may move notes, make them longer or shorter by adjusting the start or end points or delete notes. Currently there are no provisions for entering notes on the screen but it is a simple matter to go to the event list screen and add a note there then go back to the graphic screen for further editing. A zoom feature allows you to zoom in on any section down to the beat level for precise editing. And by clicking with the left mouse button and dragging you may define a portion of your song to be played from the edit screen. You may select individual channels or a mix of channels and may compare your edited track with the original track, all from within the graphic screen! Above the main screen is another screen that displays a bar graph style screen on which you may draw pitch bends, attack velocity, release velocity, poly key pressure, channel pressure and any one of the midi controllers. Just draw a curve using either rubber band line mode or sketch line mode and click to make the changes to the display. The editor is really powerful and easy to use and is yet another example of Hybrid Arts commitment to upgrading their products. Now if they will just allow you to enter as well as delete notes from this screen it will be perfect.

There are so many new features in this update that it almost feels like a new program. I know I said I was saving the best for last with the graphic editing screen but there are two more things to mention. First you now have the capability to import a single track from any of your MIDITRACK ST FILES. Say you have a bass line from one song and you want to use it in another one with little hassle. Just click on Import and chose the track you want to bring in and it is pulled out of the other file. One obvious application of this feature is to create a song, mix it to a single track, save it to a file and then extract it along with other mixed tracks to create a single song set with up to 60 different songs possible with a single disk load. With a MEGA ST or a memory upgrade you can now have a whole set of songs ready to go with no wait for disk access time during a performance. And second, an additional program called Hybriswitch is now accessible from the main screen. Memory allowing you may now have up to 10 compatible programs, such as EZSCORE PLUS and MIDITRACK ST in memory at once and use this option to switch between them quickly and easily. This feature threatens to turn the ATARI ST into the only reasonable choice for your music workstation.

All these features and power are found in a program that is extremely easy to use. All you have to do to record is point and click on the play icon and hit the space bar. To stop just hit return or click on the stop icon. This program allows the use of key press commands from the typewriter so you are not completely mouse bound. I wish more programs would provide this feature, and this is a thoughtful inclusion from Hybrid Arts. Once your music is in you can easily set up loops, chains, sections, copy tracks, move and combine tracks, change note durations, tempo, volume and anything else you can imagine (within reason). Out of all the sequencers I have seen this one offers the most features for the money and is my personal favorite. As always, a piece of software will appeal to some and not others so be sure to see a demo of this package before laying out your $375.00 (SYNCTRACK ST) or $575.00 (SMPTETRACK ST). Next month I will check out what looks to be a fantastic program that allows you to print out beautiful notation representations of your MIDITRACK ST or EZTRACK ST files. For more information contact Hybrid Arts, 11920 W. Olympic Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90064 or call them at 213-826-3777. You may also call their B.B.S. at 213-826-4288.

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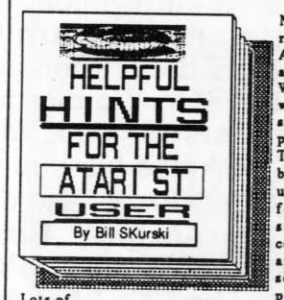

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continued from page 18

RINGS OF ZILFIN

gather supplies and build your character then it doesn't seem so bad. In fact the instructions tell you to walk back and forth between the first two villages about 10 times at the start to gather enough mushrooms for later. I look at the road sequence as being similar to roaming about the countryside in Ultima fighting battles and gaining experience. Some of the villages have the same look about them but there is enough variety and the interiors of the buildings are often different. Notes must be taken as to what is where if you are to succeed. If you buy this program thinking it will be like a Sierra On-Line graphics adventure then you will be disappointed since it really is a role playing type game and includes more of those elements.

Overall I like the program a lot and recommend it for the beginning to intermediate adventurer who wants to try something a little different in role playing. Great graphics, smooth game play and good use of sound make it really fun. The program comes on 3 single sided non protected disks and I copied all files from disks 2 and three on to 1 DS disk. There are a few duplicate file names and the company assured me that they were the same files and you only need 1 copy on your combination disk. For more information contact Strategic Simulations, Inc., 1046 N. Rengstorff Ave., Mountain View, CA 94043 or call 415-964-1200.

continued from page 1

WordPerfect

If you are just learning WP, you may want to make a "\Learn" folder for the "Learn" diskette on your Hard Drive. Once all copying is done, then you are ready to setup and start WordPerfect.

Floppy drive users will boot with the "WordPerfect" diskette backup, while HD users can boot as usual and change to the "\WP" directory. Find the program labeled "WP_START.PRG" and click on its icon. The "INSTALLATION" section of the documentation will steer you through a few simple steps to set the paths for your system. HD users will specify a path to which subdirectory the "\WP" folder is located, while two drive owners can specify paths to the datafiles on drive B:

Next you will be asked for the directory where WP may store working files. You may of course use a RamDisk for this, your floppy, or a subdirectory on your HD. I made a folder called "\WP\TMP" for these files on my Hard Drive. And finally, the documentation guides you through the process to select printers you will be using. Most of the installation process will take less time than it takes to READ about it here!

Using WordPerfect

Once WordPerfect is configured for your system, you may simply boot up your ST as you normally do, then insert the "WordPerfect" diskette in drive A: (HD users change to the \WPfolder) and click on the "WP.PRG" icon. As the manual says, starting WP is like rolling a clean sheet of paper into a typewriter with margins and spacing already set. You may begin typing your document immediately into the open box just as you did for 1st Word. The window has the familiar "slider bar" on the side for positioning within the document with the mouse, along with the GEM menu bar at the top.

If you are an expert with WP on the IBM, then you may proceed at full speed as all the functions of the keyboard match the IBM version perfectly! (Well ALMOST. The "F2" HELP functions are now called with the Atari "Help" key!) If you are used to 1st Word, take a little time at the GEM menu bar looking at what functions are available. As an added feature, when you move the mouse pointer onto one of the menu selections, you will notice that the function you choose will also have listed the function key combination needed to call up the same operation.

WP is a "..what you see is what you get" processor. If you point at the "Style" option on the menu bar and select "Underline", when you resume typing your text is underlined. To turn off the underline, point and click to "Underline" again. All functions toggle on and off in this manner. Adding or deleting text is simple. Just point and click the mouse where you wish to be and the cursor moves, as with the arrow keys. After adding the text, arrowing down or pointing and clicking will reformat the screen right before your eyes.

To cut and paste, point at the position on your screen where you wish to begin blocking, select "Block" from the "Edit" option on the menu bar, then either move your mouse over the text while holding the left button depressed to the end of the block, or use the arrow keys to move to where you wish to end the block operation. The area indicated will be highlighted, and the whole operation may be cancelled by clicking anywhere on the document, using the "Alt-F4" key to toggle blocking off, or pressing "F1" which is the WP universal "Cancel" key.

Now that the text is highlighted, choose cut, copy, or delete from the "Edit" menu bar selection. Note that in 1st Word, when you "cut" text, it is not removed from the screen, while WordPerfect actually cuts the text from your document and stores it in a temporary file for pasting later. "Copy" will save the block for a later "Paste" WITHOUT deleting the text from your document.

Using the Spell checker or Thesaurus is quite easy. Position the cursor on the word in question and select "Spell" or "Thesaurus" from the menu bar under the "Special" heading. Then select "Word" (or you may select "Document" to spell check the whole document) from the pop up menu. The speller will suggest words of close spelling, and if unsuccessful, you may chose "Phonetic" from the menu which will provide additional words that sound like your word phonetically. You may also add words to your dictionary!

The Thesaurus will give you a list of words that mean the same or that you may consider substituting for your word. Floppy drive users will be prompted to insert diskettes when necessary. WordPerfect supports all normal word processor functionsincluding automatic date insertion, italics, footnotes, math columns, indexing, centering, text columns, macros and many more. The math columns functions allow WP to act as a mini spreadsheet! Just turn on the math columns after they are defined, then "Tab" over to the first one. You will be prompted for an entry, say 200. A "Return" and "Tab" move you to the next line where you enter 300. Another "Return" and "Tab" and you may now press the plus sign (+) to cause the previous numbers to be added!

Macros may be created by toggling "Macro Define" on, then naming the macro, and going through the keystrokes you want included. Toggle "Macro Define" again to turn it off and you're done. Whenever you want your macro to be used, select "Macro Invoke" and enter the macro name.

You may also retrieve text files and output text files too! Once you are done with your document, select "Print" from the menu bar and then "Full Text" or "Page" as you wish to send your masterpiece to the printer. To exit WP select "Exit" from the "File" menu bar option. WP will ask you if you wish to save the file and prompt you for a location to store the document. You may also simply "Save" a file without clearing it from your screen, or retrieve more text to merge or page between windows.

WordPerfect also comes with a "CONVERT.PRG" which will allow you to read in 1st Word documents and convert them automatically to the WP format.

Is It Worth The Price?

WordPerfect's price of $395.00 is about 3-5 times what other processors for the ST cost yet it has been on the TOP of the best selling software for the ST since its release. Why? Because WordPerfect is recognized as a professional word processor package and as such can be depended upon to deliver excellent service for many years. A 520ST and WordPerfect can put a dependable system in your office for a fraction of the cost of other systems, and if you have a PS/2 already, you can have data file compatibility at less than half the cost of another PS. Sure you can buy a PC Clone and WP for the same price, but the clone will use 5 1/4 diskettes which makes it useless on your ST at home, and the clone won't have the mouse functions.

After this article was completed, I saved the document on an IBM formatted diskette then inserted it into the Model 80 PS/2 at the office and brought up WP there. The document read right in! That alone makes WordPerfect perfect for me.

....Charlie Young

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